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IVAN VEJEEGHEN ;

OR,

LIFE IN RUSSIA.

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IVAN VEJEEGHEN.

CHAPTER I.

A landholder, like whom, God grant, there were more in Russia!—Like priest, like people.

By our good conduct and the favourable representations of Peter Petróveetch, we gained the good opinion of the *Capitan Eespravnik*, who sometimes called upon us, invited us to drink tea with him, and allowed us to take excursions without the town. One day, when we were at his house with Peter Petróveetch, the conversation turned upon the difficulties which the country police meets with in keeping order over a wide extent of country, in a thinly peopled district, intersected with impassable morasses and woods. “Catch a vagrant who can,” said the *Capitan Eespravnik*, “if a landholder and his peasants choose to conceal him! You would require a thousand rank and file to catch a single individual in a wood which covers one or two hundred versts!” “The landholders have a great trust to answer for before their Maker,

their emperor, and their country, for every thing which is done within their possessions," said Peter Petró-veetch. "On a landholder depends all the happiness, the morality, the education, and the prosperity of his peasants; consequently, on the landed gentry collectively depends all the morality, education, and prosperity of the whole of Russia. The government places no obstacles to bar the progress of the noblesse to education and prosperity. No affectionate father cares more for the education and happiness of his darling son, than the Russian emperors care for the Russian noblesse. But why should the Russian noblesse behave like the man in the parable who hid his lord's talent in the earth? The nobleman having received it should divide it, should increase among his people their attachment to the throne, their love to their country, and excite them to morality by his own example." "That is all true," said the Sheriff; "but, in the opposite case, the noblesse will be like the barren fig-tree of which mention is made in Luke's Gospel, (chapter xiii.) A nobleman, as the favourite son of an affectionate father, ought to employ himself all his lifetime in fulfilling the will and good intentions of the common father of Russia. A nobleman who lives on his own estates, should esteem himself as much in actual service as if he sat at the imperial council-board, or was commander-in-chief of the forces. A nobleman is the head police-officer on his estate, collector of the emperor's taxes, overseer who appor-tions the district rates, judge of equity among his peasants, guardian of their health and property, and

director of the parish-school." "Excellent, excellent, Peter Petróveetch!" exclaimed the *Capitan Eespravnik*, throwing himself to embrace Veertooteen, and adding, "That is as it should be; the district-police would be then a real executive power, which could enforce order and regularity where it was wanted, by the power of law, in cases where persuasion had no effect!" "It will be so in the course of time, at the ripening of the fruits of education, the seeds of which are so uninterruptedly sown by our wise monarchs; when we shall have a sufficient number of first-rate Russian teachers for the education of our youth in the Russian fashion, not after the manner of the French or English." "These Russian foreigners have been long a bone in my throat," said the *Capitan Eespravnik*. "I have more respect for a French cook or an English coachman, than for a Russian bit of a *Knez*,* who apes Lords and Marquisses in their whims and singularities. There came, not long since, to live on his estate here, a young weather-cock who had left the service, conceiving himself ill used because his commanding officer had told him that he was not fit to occupy a distinguished situation, he not being able to write three lines logically and grammatically. *Knez* Slabogóloveen had read some French pamphlets upon politics by the assistance of his governor, and as he subscribed for some English newspapers, he fancied

* *Knez* is the highest title of Russian nobility, and corresponds with Duke in English, but is generally translated 'Prince.' As titles are extended to the whole family of those who possess them, it may be easily conceived that there is a considerable number of such princes in the Russian empire.

himself a great politician, and born to be a lawgiver to his country. Along with the fumes of champaign, he had filled the heads of his blind companions with rules of philanthropy and wisdom out of Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, and passed for a liberal, an orator, and a stickler for the rights of man. After taking this false step on the road of ambition, he came to his estate —, and do you know what was the end of his philosophy?" "Doubtless he began to establish country-schools, and exert himself for the improvement of his peasants," said Meloveeden. "You have not hit the nail on the head," said the *Capitan Eespravnik*, laughing. "The Government which cares for the welfare of its subjects in reality, though not in empty words, was obliged to take into its own hands the guardianship of the property of this eloquent orator of the human race, owing to his barbarous treatment of his peasants and destructive management of his estates. Listen to bawlers of this stamp after a sumptuous dinner, or of an evening amongst a crowd of young people: they will treat you to a dissertation on the happiness of mankind or on legislation; but at their own houses, and in every place under their controul, they are would-be Bashaws. The real friend of mankind does not cry out nor bawl against the laws of the land or established order, but contenting himself with things as they are, does as much good as is in his power; and much good can be done always and every where,* if there be only an in-

* A maxim borrowed from the experience of one of the most celebrated nations of antiquity: see Exodus, chapter fifth.

clination to do it ! Among us, the practice of good must be brought to much greater perfection before we meddle with theory. Do you know what I would propose, Peter Petróveetch ? Take these gentlemen to our friend Alexander Alexandroveetch Rossiyan-éenoff. You will see what people among us are hid under a bushel ; I will give you my own horses. Move about, gentlemen, you have had a long stay in our little town !”

Next morning we set out on our visit to Mr. Rossiyanéenoff who lived on his estate which was twenty five versts* distant from the town. At the distance of fifteen versts, we observed an astonishing difference in the cultivation of the fields. In low places, trenches were every where cut to let off the water. The fields were properly measured off and manured ; and the meadows were free from mole-heaps and useless bushes. On the brink of a winding rivulet, a paved descent was formed from the pasture, that the cattle might drink without being wetted, or muddling the water. The road on both sides was planted with trees ; bridges were every where erected, and boggy parts of the road covered with spars. “ You may see,” said Peter Petróveetch, “ that we have entered the possessions of an orderly man ?” On arriving at the village, Meloveeden clapped his hands with admiration, and exclaimed ; “ Look what the whole of Russia could be and should be !” Well-finished wooden *eezbas* were erected in single rows on both sides of

* A verst is two thirds of an English mile.

the road. The windows were embellished with graven ornaments, and the court-yards all inclosed with high railings and with neat gates and roofs. The houses were placed at some distance from each other, as a precaution against fire. Between the houses were little gardens with fruit-trees. Behind the court-yards were orchards, and at their extremity, barns. At the end of the village stood a fine stone church, shaded with tall lime-trees. The priest's house was distinguished by its clean and neat appearance. Beside the church were some pretty little buildings for the use of the community. In one of them was established an infirmary and apothecary's shop; in another an hospital for the maintenance of the friendless, the infirm and the aged; in a third, the village storehouse and shop, containing such wares as are indispensable to peasants, as well as the first necessities of life; in the fourth, the village-school and *slovesnoy* court.* At the extremity of the village was a smithy, and in the middle a large well. The peasants of both sexes had a healthy appearance, and the young women were distinguished for their beauty, the natural consequence of contentment.† We met on the street neither dirty children, nor ragged women, nor drunken men. The

* Literally *court of words*, because in the ordinary courts of law the pleadings are carried on in writing. In towns the police-majors preside at these courts of words, but when the subject contested amounts to more than eighteen roubles, (about fifteen shillings sterling,) their jurisdiction ceases.

† If the happiness of the labouring classes is to be measured by their physiognomy, the Russians will not stand high on the European scale.

peasants' horses and cattle were of an excellent breed, and the machines and implements for agriculture were all in good order. We entered into one peasant's house in order to have a specimen of their domestic economy. The house had a cellar, and was divided into two halves, one with a chimney, the other without one. The first, which was composed of three divisions, was occupied by the family ; in the second they baked bread, boiled the victuals for themselves and drink for the cattle, dried their wet clothes when they returned from work in bad weather and the like. " I know some landholders," said Meloveeden, " who, seized with a foreign mania, took it into their heads to build German houses for Russian peasants, and to require of them as much cleanliness as in Germany. That is an absolute impossibility in this country, and not only does not add to the happiness of the peasant, but is a great incumbrance to his life. Our climate and local circumstances require a different structure for our houses than in Germany and England. It is impossible to build large stone houses for the peasants among us, because, in the first place, it is not every where that we have materials for that purpose, and in the second, because it costs dearer, and our peasants do not live in large families, and therefore have no necessity for a number of rooms, which must be heated in the greater part of Russia eight months in the year. Without a smoky *eezba* it is even difficult for a Russian peasant to live in our moist and cold climate in the northern governments : without it he would have no place to dry himself. The wish of doing

good frequently brings no advantage if it is carried into effect without a knowledge of local circumstances. In this respect, Mr. Rossiyanéenoff seems to understand his business." In the porch,* we saw *laptee*.† "That has still a smell of barbarity," said Meloveeden. Peter Petróveetch examined them with more attention, and said : "These are not *laptee* but *shmónee*, that is to say, coverings for the feet made of hemp. The use of *laptee* is less advantageous, as they require a great deal of wood."‡ "When do your peasants wear *shmónee*?" inquired he at a man whom he met : "I see that on the street they are all in boots." "When they go a fishing, my son : in the meadows during the hay-harvest, and in wood-work, they save the boots ; and the feet too are not so comfortable in a boot as they are in a *lapta* made of well tarred twine." "Do you see that they make use of this sort of shoes only during work, and they are really much better adapted for this purpose than the wooden shoes of the French and German peasants. If the peasant amidst contentment has not given up the use of such a covering for his feet, it is a proof that it is useful and suitable for him."

Around the peasant's court-yard was a shed, where carts, sledges, ploughs, and harrows stood, and where

* A porch, or *scynee*, as it is called in Russian, is almost indispensable to prevent the egress of the heat created by the stove.

† Bark-shoes plaited in the same way that list-shoes are made in this country, but much clumsier : they are the covering for the feet most commonly used by the Russian peasants.

‡ Being made of the bark of young birch trees.

they stabled the horses occasionally. At the end of the yard was a cow-house and stable, and beyond the house, a vapour-bath. I asked the mistress what they used for light in the winter-time. "Our neighbours," replied she, "the peasants of other masters, burn splinters of wood, father, but we light our *eezbas* with lamps supplied with hemp-oil. You see, we have not to buy the hemp-oil, my son; for every woman among us makes her oil from the seed."—"Have you a drinking-house in the village?" asked Meloveeden. "God forbid, my worthy fathers!" replied the woman. "In old times when our former *báreen** was alive, there was a drinking-house here: so our peasants got drunk regularly on holidays, and were out of sorts on working days. But, now, thank God, there is an end to that. And our parson, God save him, talks to us in the church that it is a great sin to get drunk, and our surgeon tells us that spirits shorten the life, and our master forbids us to drink, and hates drunkards; so drunkenness is at an end, and both man and money are better housekeepers. It is another affair, at Easter, or a marriage, or a christening: then we brew beer, and our *báreen* himself gives us spirits. In our autumn and winter-work, our *báreen* also orders the labourers to drink a glass of vodky, but no more than one a piece. God save him; he is a real father and no *ghospodeen*."

Five versts beyond the village, on the high bank of a river, stood the manor-house, built of wood on a

* One of the appellations given by the Russian peasants to their proprietor.

stone foundation, painted green, with a red roof. Behind the house a large garden extended towards the river. Around the court-yard were various establishments for domestic purposes. The symmetry of the parts shewed the skill of the architect, and the want of ornament was fully compensated by the neatness and solidity of the building. At the entrance, we were met by a servant neatly dressed, though very plainly. He said that his master had gone into the fields, but his mistress was superintending her daughters' lessons. We were met in the anti-chamber by the landlord's oldest son, a youth of sixteen years of age, who begged us to wait without impatience till his mother had finished her occupation. The youth's tall figure, rosy cheeks, and good address, shewed that as great pains had been taken on his physical education as on his moral. Peter Petróveetch, who was an intimate acquaintance of the family, proposed to us to look through the rooms and garden. The landlord's son, Alesha, undertook to be our guide. Passing through three saloons and a hall, which were distinguishable for nothing but their uncommon neatness, we entered Mr. Rossiyanéenoff's cabinet. It was a large room, around which were disposed immense shelves full of books in the Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian, and Russian languages. In the middle of the room were three tables; on one lay newspapers and periodical works; on the other, papers in manuscript; and on the third, newly received books. In another room which was attached to the cabinet, there were shelves containing physical instruments, a chemical apparatus,

and models of various machines ; on the tables stood globes, and one side of the hall was hung with geographical maps. A small case with shelves contained within it a collection of minerals. “ This smells of Europe ! ” said Meloveeden. From thence we went into the garden, which contained neither artificial ponds which contaminate the air by their poisonous exhalations, nor dearly-built bridges on dry-land, nor grotesque summer-houses of a barbarous architecture, nor new ruins. The garden was filled with fruit trees and different berry-bushes, distributed very tastefully. Nut and lime-tree groves afforded an agreeable retreat in hot weather ; while a large alley round the garden, shaded with high trees, served for a promenade. On plots of grass were erected swinging ropes and different things to amuse children. At the end of the garden, on the south side, there was an orangerie, not a large one, but well constructed. “ That is another luxury,” said Meloveeden. “ A luxury which is not only pardonable, but even useful,” replied Peter Petróveetch. “ What can be more agreeable to an inhabitant of the north, than the fondling of the productions of more favoured climates ? The very contemplation of the diversity, riches, and liberality of nature, elevates the soul, and brings the creature nearer to the Creator.— Amidst these productions of various regions, thought descends upon the earthly globe. I will say more— why should we deprive ourselves of the satisfaction of raising the tender fruits which nature has denied our northern climate ? This is not the repletion of a shameful gluttony, but the satisfaction of a pardonable

curiosity. Besides, it appears to me a much more commendable occupation to raise the fruits of the earth, than to keep a variety of living creatures under restraint, and hurt the weaker animals." On a sudden a voice was heard behind us : we saw a man of a cheerful and healthy countenance, in a leathern cap and green camblet surtout, who was making up to us. It was the landlord himself. "How do you do, my friend," said he, stretching out his hand to Peter Petróveetch, who presented us to him, and in a few words related our proceedings. "I have already heard in part," added our landlord : "you will often be obliged here to listen to what you do not wish to hear. Walking newspapers are among us in greater circulation than printed ones. If one wishes to know the truth, he should only believe the hundredth part of the provincial news. I was told that two Russian gentlemen had arrived from India through the Kirgheezean *steppe*, where one had been a reigning prince, and the other his minister, and that they had brought with them whole barrels of ducats and bales of shawls. I am persuaded that, if these news reach another government, one of you will be transformed into the great Mogul, and the other into some terrible warrior.—Your treasures will be magnified to millions of ducats, and barrels filled with diamonds. But I beg you will enter the room—it is dinner-time."

On entering, the worthy landlord presented us to his wife and two daughters, of whom the oldest was fourteen and the youngest twelve years of age. The youngest son was ten years old. To our astonishment,

the lady of the house addressed us in Russian, and was dressed very plainly, although she received for the first time guests who passed for *millionaires*. The landlord presented to us also the teachers of his children, a Frenchman, Monsieur Instruí, and a German, Herr Hutman, whom he called his friends. It appeared to me singular that Mr. Rossiyanéenoff, whom Peter Petróveetch described as extremely patriotic and an enemy of foreign education, should keep in his house foreigners to teach his children. Peter Petróveetch perceived my astonishment, from the oblique glances which I cast on the foreigners, and communicated my observations to the landlord. Mr. Rossiyanéenoff took me and Meloveeden into another room, and said : “ Be not astonished, gentlemen, that I employ foreigners in the education of my children. To deliver youth unconditionally into the hands of foreigners is our greatest folly, which has been the source of all sorts of mischief to the Russian noblesse : it is this which has made it almost a foreign colony in Russia, hardly knowing their mother-tongue, nor its customs, nor its history, but taught from their infancy to love every thing which is French and English, and despise every thing which is Russian. But to employ foreigners under the superintendence of parents, is proper and commendable, if people be selected for that purpose of a respectable moral character and behaviour, and not seekers of adventures and charlatans. Without a knowledge of foreign languages, a man can never acquire that refinement which is peculiar to Europeans. Other nations have got before us in the march of intel-

lect, and have more means of keeping continually ahead of us in the career of science. To translate every thing worthy of attention and curiosity which appears in foreign countries, would be impossible. To contrive from the resources of our own minds every thing which has been already discovered and invented, would be ridiculous, so that it is necessary to adopt the easiest means of acquiring the immense empire of knowledge, and those means are an acquaintance with foreign languages. By knowing them, you become a citizen of the world : you must agree that you must first become a *man* before you are either a Frenchman or a Russian. I love Russia more than my life. I wish its happiness more than I do that of my own children, and am willing to sacrifice for her my own life and that of my children, my property, and all my earthly comforts ; but it does not follow from thence, that I ought not to love foreigners, nor to avail myself of the productions of their minds and ingenuity. That would be a barbarism worthy of a Turk, a Chinese, or an Algerine. The first objects in the education of my children are the learning of their mother-tongue, with the history and statistics of Russia ; and my first and chief endeavour is to impregnate the minds of my children with an unlimited attachment to every thing pertaining to their native country. That is my part of the business. Amidst all this I do not conceal from them, that we have not yet arrived at that degree of refinement which is found in other nations : but, on the other hand, I excite a desire in their minds to raise their country, by the propagation of every thing which is good and

useful. The domestic education of my oldest son is now finished, and I intend next winter to send him to the university." We were called to the table, and Mr. Rossiyanéenoff put an end to his explanation.

The dinner consisted of four courses, prepared with taste and abundance. The wine did not run over the brim as they say ; but after each course, every one of the company, except the children and ladies, had a large glass poured out to them of excellent wine.— Besides, there were decanters of water, small beer, *quass*, cyder, and wine made of apples and berries, which was an excellent drink, and sparkled like champagne, appearing to me much more agreeable than real wine. For a dessert we had beautiful ripe fruit. In addition to Mr. Rossiyanéenoff's family, the two teachers and ourselves, at the table were two retired officers, two old women, distant relations of the landlady, and the parish priest. I observed with satisfaction that all the guests without exception were served alike, both in regard to eating and drinking. That is not always the case with gentlemen who give poor people a place at their table. Mr. and Mrs. Rossiyanéenoff, on the contrary, behaved to all with extreme civility, nor did the landlord shew his wit at the expence of the poor people who enjoyed his hospitality. During dinner the conversation was of a general nature. After it was finished, we all went into the garden, and, waiting for coffee, took our seats under the shades of some dense lime trees. All at once the tears trickled from Meloveeden's eyes. He drew upon him the attention of all, as well as their sympathy, and ra-

ther disconcerted our entertainers. "You are melancholy," said the lady of the house. "No, madam; these are tears of contrition and not of melancholy. I am enraptured with your family happiness, the prosperity of your peasants, and the well ordered condition of your estate, and rejoice that you are Russians." The landlord squeezed Melovéeden's hand, and added, "What you say is true: we, or at least I, am happy in my family." Mrs. Rossiyanéenoff, in place of an answer, tenderly embraced her husband, and the children threw themselves about his neck, exclaiming, "Papa, you form all our happiness and all our joy!" One of the retired officers squeezed Mr. Rossiyanéenoff's hand; the other looked up to the heavens and crossed himself; the females went to kiss the hands of the worthy couple. An old servant who was bringing in coffee, shed tears in silence. Mr. Rossiyanéenoff was touched to the heart. "You see now whether I am happy," exclaimed he. "Can there be a greater bliss than that of being loved by worthy beings. Do not think, however, that my happiness has cost me much trouble. No! it is the kindness of Providence, for which I shall never cease to return thanks. I have endeavoured only to fulfil my duty as far as I have been able, nothing more. If you have any curiosity, I will relate my history to you in a few words.

"My father was an officer in the navy, and married for love, without having any means to support his family besides his pay. He remained in the service till he attained the rank of general, and owing to these circumstances could not give me and my sisters a splen-

did education. He attained riches by his bravery, taking some rich prizes in the Turkish war. His shattered constitution would not allow him to remain longer in the navy : he retired, bought this property, consisting of five hundred souls, and settled in the country. My sisters married as soon as their parents were able to give them a sufficient dowry. I entered the Guards, but had the misfortune to hurt myself by a fall from my horse, and was obliged by the doctor's advice to retire from the service. I was then no more than nineteen years of age. I was advised to live some years in a warm climate, to recruit my strength and take the benefit of the mineral waters. I employed that time in educating myself, went through a regular course of study in the university of Bologna, and afterwards completed my education in Paris. Returning to my native country with renovated health and fresh acquirements, I wished to be useful to my country in the civil service. At that time I had the misfortune to lose my parents, and was left a solitary individual in the world. After serving some years in a petty situation, and seeing that neither my endeavours nor my zeal, nor, I may venture to say, capacity and higher acquirements than those of my colleagues, were of any avail to raise me above the common herd, I began to cool in my zeal for the public welfare. An old friend of my father's, to whom I complained of my fate, cured me of my error, and pointed out to me the true road to happiness. " My dear friend ! " said he to me one day, " you have no family connections, and do not belong to the number of those children of for-

tune whose entire value consists in the name ; consequently you will be always doomed to support on your shoulders, amidst the chancery-dirt which lies at the foot of the hill of fortune, the incapacity of others, that it may be crowned by your services. You must wait for some extraordinary opportunity, one of those fortunate configurations of the heavenly bodies described in the calendars, ere the rays of the sun penetrate through the thick atmosphere of nepotism, and shine upon you, a gentleman of no family. There are exceptions, I do not dispute ; but to wait for such a chance requires an iron patience, which you do not possess. What is it that you seek ? It is to be useful to your sovereign and country, is it not ? You have the means in your own hands. You have five hundred souls of peasants. Dedicate yourself to their happiness. Believe me, you would not have a long time to wait, before the happiness of five hundred males, and probably as many females, would be dependent upon you. You are well instructed, you have read and travelled much, and consequently have many capabilities for managing your estate, making your peasants happy, and what is more, being an example to others. Economy is not difficult, and your *starost* with your own knowledge of local circumstances will be more useful to you than two courses of agronomy. The chief thing is to keep your expences within your income, and to apply the balance which remains in your favour, in the improvement of your own property, and of the condition of your peasants. Keep your wants within bounds, restrain your desires, and you

will have a surplus revenue : apply this to what is useful, and it will bring you contentment, comfort, and happiness !” Like a man blind from his birth, who, when he first recovers his sight after a successful operation, is enchanted with the view of objects of which he had no previous conception, I recovered the use of my mental faculties by the prescription of my real friend. This is his daughter !” added Mr. Rossiyan-
eenoff, pointing to his wife. “ I married, left the service, and settled on my estate. My father being old and infirm at the time when he retired to the country, could take no part in the management of his estate, and left it to me in the same condition as he had bought it. The fields were most wretchedly cultivated, the peasants in poverty, and in a half savage state as regarded their moral condition. In the course of twenty years, with God’s assistance, and the strenuous endeavours of myself and my wife, we have succeeded in bringing our property to the state in which you see it. I had no independent capital, and carried on my improvements entirely from my income, by degrees, making all the haste I could without precipitation, and building upon a solid foundation. God has blessed my exertions. Now all the young people on my estate know how to read, and comprehend their duty to God, the emperor, their master, and their equals. Without letters, gentlemen, it is impossible to implant morality in the minds of the people, or to give them a due conception of the duties which conduce to their real happiness. People cannot be instructed by the mere sense of hearing, and by dint

of repeated practice, as poodle dogs are drilled. Before a man be instructed, he must be able to read : what he reads he will recollect, and besides, the time employed in reading is no misspending of what might be applied to more useful purposes ; for the greater part of uninstructed people spend their leisure hours and days in irregularity. My peasants soon understood that I had their good in view, and assisted me in my objects with heart and soul. In this I was also greatly indebted to our worthy clergyman, who, in the midst of all his poverty, behaved himself in such a manner that the peasants could not but respect him. He took no participation in their drinking-bouts and amusements, but visited them only when he went to give them spiritual assistance, advice, admonition, or to perform his clerical duty. The reverend pastor ate his bread in the sweat of his face, working with his own hands a small plot of ground ; for except his legal provision, he would never take any thing from the peasants. He settled disputes, never in his own person giving occasion for dissatisfaction ; he never allowed in his presence any improper jokes, nor gave occasion to any himself. In a word, father Simeon was and is such a man as a parish clergyman should be—gentle, abstemious, humane, and serious in his behaviour. You saw him at dinner, gentlemen. His condition is now improved along with the condition of us all. I reckon it the first duty of a landholder to raise the clergyman to such a state that he can live independent of the peasants ; he will not till then be respected by his parishioners, but can *then* proceed without fear in correcting their moral conduct.

“Following the advice of my father-in-law, I began the management of my estate, not after the English or German fashion, but after a fashion suitable to our climate, soil, and manners. No new devices were carried into execution by me on a great scale, till I had made repeated trials of their effects upon a small. At last we finished our buildings, improved our fields, and nothing remains for us now to do but to maintain what we have done.”

We passed our time in the company of the worthy Mr. Rossiyanéenoff and his family in the most agreeable manner, and at sun-set, departed for the town, not however without being earnestly pressed by the landlord and landlady to remain. I made haste to return, as the next day was that in which the post would arrive, and I was quite impatient for letters from Moscow. We promised to come another time and spend some days with the worthy Alexander Alexandro-veetch, and left him with a melancholy heart as if it were from our father's house. When we got beyond the gate, Meloveeden crossed himself, and raising his eyes to heaven, exclaimed: “God bless Russia, and grant her many more such landholders.”

CHAPTER II.

A chip of the old block.—Silas Meeneetch Glazdooren.

WE went by another road in order to shorten the journey. On leaving Mr. Rossiyanéenoff's property and approaching a wood, we heard the sound of huntsmen's horns, the barking of dogs, and the shouting of sportsmen. On a sudden a fox leaped from an opening in the wood, and plunged into a field sown with corn.—He was quickly pursued by a pack of hounds and a dozen of horsemen. One of them, a man with long mustachios, galloped furiously in advance, without his cap, and his hair all in disorder, and bawled out, like a person beside himself, "*átoo áro ! átoo áro*" ! whipping and spurring his horse at the sametime. The fox in order to escape inevitable destruction by a change of course (a plan adopted not unfrequently by two-legged animals), suddenly turned off to the main road ; the dogs and sportsmen darted after him, pursuing furiously the weary creature. At last the fox, leaping across the ditch, threw himself directly among our horses' feet ; the dogs after him, and caught him. The eager sportsman, with the rapidity of a whirlwind, flew across the ditch, and seeing the dogs tearing the fox, began to chastise them with his whip, making a hideous noise at the same time. Our horses took fright

and began to rear themselves, when the bickering and snarling of the dogs got up ; but as soon as the sportsman's whip touched their legs, they ran to a side, our *breetchka* was upset, and we were thrown into the ditch. Fortunately we were not hurt, but only fell up to our necks in dirt, and could not disentangle ourselves from under the *breetchka*. There we lay, in the predicament of flies under a glass tumbler. A noise and laughing got up around us. Meloveeden fell into a violent passion, and threatened to break the head of the rascal who was the cause of our unlucky mishap. I cursed the hunt and the huntsmen, and Peter Petróveetch was silent, At last the *breetchka* began to move away from over us. The sportsmen shoved it to a side, and we clambered out of the ditch, all wet and dirty like as many craw-fish. A dozen of sportsmen were collected on the road, and one of them, the same who had taken the lead, came up to us, and after smothering his laughter, said : “ Forgive us, gentlemen, my hounds are at fault. I would not be Silas Glazdooren, if there were dogs equal to my *Zalet* and *Veentorka* in any part of the empire. That damned fox threw himself among your horses' feet, but *Zalet* and *Veentorka* would snatch the game, though it were in the fangs of a wolf.” Peter Petróveetch whispered to Meloveeden not to shew his passion, or abuse the fortunate possessor of *Zalet* and *Veentorka*, while I with wonder gazed on that prodigy. His round red face was covered with copious perspiration and dust. Between his long ruby nose and thick lips, were planted a pair of long red whiskers, like squirrels' tails.—

His dishevelled hair was covered with a small, weather-beaten, green leather cap. He was dressed in a short green stuff *Tchekmen*,* and striped trowsers. A tobacco pipe was in one of his outer pockets, and on his right shoulder from a belt hung his hunting horn, while on his left was a small flask covered with morocco leather. In his left hand he held a whip; his right he extended to Peter Petróveetch, and began again to speak. "Give me your hand, brother, and don't be angry. It is a sad misfortune that you fell into the ditch! But for my part, there is not a ditch or pit for twenty versts round into which I have not tumbled, in chasing hares and foxes. But you, brethren, why do you stare at me like wild beasts?" added he, looking first to me, then to Meloveeden. "Have done with your anger! Is it my fault that you fell into the kennel! If it had depended upon me, I would much rather have soused you in punch. You know, mischief will happen of its own accord!" At these words, Glazdooren, taking a hold of his flask, drank a mouthful of its contents, then loosening it from his shoulder, and handing it to Peter Petróveetch, he said; "Drink, brother, it is famous Anísovka.† It will freshen you up." Peter Petróveetch gave him the flask back, and in the name of us all, replied:—"My good Sir, your carelessness was the cause of our unlucky adventure. As you did not do it intentionally, we willingly excuse you, but beg that in recompense for what we

* The single-breasted surtout worn among the Cossacks.

† An infusion of Anise-seed in spirits.

have suffered from your passion for hunting, you would furnish us with the means of changing our clothes and setting off without delay for the town in your carriage."

"With pleasure, my dearest fellow," exclaimed Glazdooren: "I will give you my own Moscow calash, and six of my wild Kirgheezyan horses. My house is only three versts from this; seat yourselves on the horses of my sportsmen, and we shall be there in a crack. But drink something: aye, aye, it is excellent *anísorka*." "We drink no spirits," said Meloveeden. "How, not drink spirits; nonsense!" exclaimed Glazdooren: "Be ashamed of yourselves, you are not young ladies!" We still refused: Glazdooren then proceeded to administer to his companions, presenting to us, one by one, ten head of the neighbouring gentry, calling each of them by his christian name and his patronymic. After that he asked us: "But with whom have I the honour to be acquainted: may I not know the rank, name, and family? yes, and from what quarter of the empire? You appear not to belong to this part of the country." Peter Petróveetch, fearing lest Meloveeden should in his rage say something unpleasant to Glazdooren, took upon himself to be spokesman. "These gentlemen, (calling us by our family names,) have come to our town upon business of their own, but I have lived there three years, and am astonished that you have neither seen me nor that I have had the honour of seeing you before this time, respectable gentlemen." "That's true, but you surely never frequent the tavern kept by Shnaps the German?" asked one of Glazdooren's friends. "No, but I am

acquainted in many houses," replied Peter Petróveetch. "We do not drive about from house to house in the town," replied Glazdooren. "Our agents manage our business with the lawyers, and we meet with our brotherhood at bear or wolf hunts, and at elections. Yes, drink, my brethren, *anísorka*; it is really excellent!" On our refusal being repeated, Glazdooren exclaimed: "But wait a while, and I will treat you at home to such cordials as are not to be met with through the whole government. My wife herself makes them. She was brought up at Petersburg, and at first would have fallen into a fit at the smell of spirits and tobacco-smoke, but at length she is so far broken in, that she can almost herself smoke, and from morning to night does nothing but make cordials and bitters for me. But it is time to go home. Here, my lads, rub the mud off these gentlemen with grass. Grey-pawed Pheelka, blear-eyed Senka, and red-headed Meetka, go home on foot. Lavrooshka, you rogne, run into the wood and call the bugles; shut up the dogs and go home. Let the peasants also go to their homes, and tell them to be all in the field the day after to-morrow, by day-light. You must block up the thicket which is beyond Seedor's field, and let in the dogs. Petrooshka has seen the fresh trail of a wolf, three days running. Give me my horse. Now, gentlemen, I am at your service."

The axle and one of the hind-wheels of our breetchka were broken. The huntsmen spliced it with a spar, and dragged it to the blacksmith's. We rode with Glazdooren on the huntsmen's horses. One of the

guests proposed riding through a field of corn. "What sort of a manager art thou, brother Aneezim Stepan-oveetch?" said Glazdooren. "It is another affair to gallop through corn after a hare: there is no sin in that: but when there is no business, there is nothing to be gained by it. No, we will take the beaten road, and in the meantime, my lads will give you a song. Hey, my boys, let us hear some of your music."

The huntsmen had scarcely finished their song when Glazdooren halted, and we all followed his example. "Sophron, hand here some fresh *anísovka*!" said Glazdooren. One of the huntsmen untied a flask from his saddle, and gave it to his master, who, after taking a draught of spirits, handed it round to his comrades. "Sportsmen must drink," said Glazdooren turning to Meloveeden: "*Vodky* invigorates the strength and freshens the blood." "Quite the contrary; I believe that spirits inflame the blood, and weaken the constitution," returned Meloveeden.—"Nonsense, brother, nonsense," exclaimed Glazdooren. "That is what the German doctor says, but he makes no converts among us. Monsieur * Wasserbrodt never tastes spirits, and is as lean and scraggy as a withered horse: Silas Glazdooren drinks his dram like all sinners, and is as healthy and strong as a three-year-old bear. Don't believe, brother, what these Germans say. They only want to get their wares off their hands, and for that reason, this Monsieur Wasserbrodt wishes to physic me with his decoctions

* *Monsieur* in Russian is frequently applied by way of mock compliment, when speaking of a foreigner, whatever be his nation.

in place of vodka. But Silas Glazdooren is not the man to be humbugged by him. Blow your bugles and march at the gallop !”

‘ Wolves must be fought after their own fashion,’ as the saying is. We galloped after them. On coming up to a little village, we met with a meagre flock of sheep returning from the field. The grey-hounds, who were uncoupled, flew upon the sheep, and dispatched two of them upon the spot. The shepherd durst not drive away the ghospodeen’s dogs, and the huntsmen stopped to gratify themselves with the spectacle, which put Glazdooren into high glee. “ Bravo, *Zalet !* to it, *Vintorka, atoo ávo, átoo ávo !*” cried he with all his strength. When this sheep-bating was over, we proceeded at a slow pace to Glazdooren’s own village.

The first object which met our eyes was the drinking-house, beside which there was a crowd of peasants. “ You allow a *Kabák* to be kept on your estate ?” said Peter Petróveetch. “ What a question,” exclaimed Glazdooren in amazement. “ Don’t the vodka-farmers pay for it, and if they do, why should not they be allowed to establish a *Kabák* under my nose if they please !” “ Convincing logic,” said Peter Petróveetch to me.

The village belonging to Glazdooren formed quite a contrast to that of Mr. Rossiyanéenoff. Here the cabins were half in ruins, the court-yards half fenced in, and the thatching of the houses admitted the light in several places. The street was impassable for the dirt. Miserable half-naked boys on perceiving us ran crying into the *eezbas*, fearing the dogs and the whips. The

peasants were ragged, and had a gloomy repulsive appearance: the women were in tatters, and owing to that, they almost all looked ill. It is true there were some pretty faces which peeped out at the windows, and some good looking girls dressed with tawdry finery, who sallied forth from their gates at our approach, to pay their respects to Glazdooren, who saluted them in a very familiar tone, and shook his fingers at them with a smile. On leaving the village, we saw at a distance the Manor-house. Glazdooren ordered the horns to be blown, and gave the word of command to gallop, and we set off as fast as the animals could carry us. On entering the court-yard through a crazy gate, we halted, while Glazdooren in the buoyancy of his spirits leaped from his horse upon the tottering stair-case, and entered the lobby. A crowd of tatterdemalion servants met us at the door. It would have been difficult to guess what the colour of their livery was, and what metal had been used for the lace which appeared from days of yore to have adorned their rags by way of fringes. Glazdooren had hardly crossed the anti-chamber, when he raised a tremendous noise, and fell a scolding every body because the table was not covered. He threatened the butler with the stable,* kicked about the footman, and saluted his wife with certain contortions of visage which have never yet appeared in print. The house became all alive; men-servants, maid-servants and dogs, bustled about the rooms, the doors slapped, the chairs cracked,

* The place where whippings are usually administered.

and in the midst of this confusion, Glazdooren's voice was distinguishable like that of a shipmaster to his crew in the time of a storm. At last the table was covered, and a late sportsman's dinner was served up. The guests assembled in the hall, and Mrs. Glazdooren, a beautiful young woman, appeared, with her two daughters who were from seven to nine years of age. The landlord did not trouble himself about presenting his wife to us; he only hauled us all to a table on which stood vodky-bottles, and recommended to all his beloved *anísorka*. We introduced ourselves to the lady of the house, and related what occasion had brought us thither, giving her to understand in an indirect manner that we were not amongst the number of her husband's friends, our acquaintance having been accidentally formed on the highway. Scarcely had Mrs. Glazdooren pronounced a few words, when Vertooten exclaimed: "How, don't you know me, Anna Elvovna?" "Is it you, Peter Petróveetch?" They entered into explanations, and we learned that Peter Petróveetch had been a friend of the lady's father, and had carried her when a child in his arms. The landlady was quite overjoyed at this meeting, and even shed tears at the recollection of her past life, of which Veertooten had been a witness. Glazdooren, in place of shewing any tenderness or respect, seized upon Peter Petróveetch's arm, and dragging him to the little table, exclaimed: "Here, drink *anísorka*, old friend of my father-in-law!"

When we were requested to sit down to table, all the guests hurried to the end which was occupied

by the landlord, avoiding the neighbourhood of the ladies as an unfavourable position. Though we were not hungry, we sat down at the landlady's end. The table was surrounded by a file of servants, two of them to each cover; they were on the alert only to remove such plates as contained any fragments, and attended to the guests' orders at discretion. The dogs crowded under the table and about the guests, in order to lay hold of any bones that should be thrown to them by the sportsmen. The table was provided with different sorts of cordials, which were strongly recommended by the landlord's praises, and still more strongly by the example which he set for the good of his guests. The conversation was very interesting and warm. Every one praised his own hounds, horses, fowling-pieces, and huntsmen; related curious sporting anecdotes anent hares and foxes; and celebrated victories gained over bears and wolves. Every one bragged of his own skill and prowess, particularly in those dangers which happened in the chase. But Glazdooren, if he did not overcome them all in argument, did so at least in clamour, and came off with flying colours. But, as one of the guests would by no means give in, maintaining that his dog was better than Glazdooren's Zalet, it was resolved that after dinner the cards should determine which person both these famous dogs should in future belong to, and thereby close this controversy for ever.

On rising from table, the guests passed into another large room, into which pipes and coffee were brought. On a sudden the door opened with a bounce, and in

rushed a gang of male and female gipseys, with *balalaikas*, * playing and singing. “ Ayee shjghee, ayee shjghee, góvoree !” (Burn, burn, but speak !)—Without waiting for orders, one half of the gipseys fell a dancing, while the other half, forming a circle, began to sing a dancing song with the accompaniment of balalaikas, shouting and whistling. The guests stretched themselves out upon the *divans* † with their pipes, praised the skill of the dancers and the beauty of the girls, while Glazdooren proudly strutted about the performers and bawled, “ *Bravo, bravo, bad, excellent, quicker !*” Peter Petróveetch and Melo-vedden along with me went into the drawing-room, where the lady of the house sat alone. “ Pardon my freedom,” said Veertooteen, “ but it is really incomprehensible to me, how you, whose education was more suited for a quiet life, and for a higher scale of society, could tolerate the *corps-de-garde* tone of your guests, and the boisterous life of your husband ?” She blushed, and after a short silence replied : “ It is true that my husband is rather noisy, but he is not a bad man, for his way of life is a consequence of his upbringing and of bad examples. While but a child, he was left an orphan under the guardianship of his uncle, who was persuaded that a nobleman wanted no more learning than to be able to sign his name and be a good sportsman ; that not only the earth but even the heavenly luminaries were made for the pleasure

* The Russian guitar.

† A *divan* is a sort of couch made of elastic cushions, not bound together into a wooden frame as in a sofa.

of the noblesse, and that to live means to eat, drink, and be merry. One day the governor being displeased with him when he had been appointed to preside at an election, asked him, in the assembly of noblesse, "Tell me, Frol Timophayeveetch, for what end was a head given to man?" "To wear a hat and get drunk," replied the worthy uncle with a serious air. From that you may judge what education my husband received under the care of such a guardian and tutor. An extraordinary occurrence or, properly speaking, fatality united me with Silas Meeneetch. You know that my father had nothing but his salary to live upon, and that my late mother herself undertook my education. On the death of my parents, I was taken home by a widow-aunt of mine, who loved me with the fondness of a mother. She was but indifferently provided for, and lived after her husband's death in a small village of this district. Her deceased husband was owing my husband's uncle a sum of money which she was never able to pay, and she would have been deprived of her last refuge in her old age, if my husband, to whom the bills fell by inheritance, had chosen to prosecute her. On a visit to my aunt, he fell in love with me, and offered me his hand. I— — — but why should I spin out the explanation—I married him and the bills were cancelled. As I was a peace-offering for my benefactress, I was happy. Besides, my husband loves me, and it is my duty — — — to put up patiently with his little weaknesses. We have all our failings!"

Glazdooren came into the room. "Ashenka!" said

he, "go and fetch out of the commode a couple of thousand roubles. We have been playing at cards, and I have lost a thousand roubles to Travleen, but to make up for that, I have won his famous dog Veekhory. He is quite in despair, and I am resolved to celebrate this achievement. I have now the two finest hounds in the whole of Russia! now, make us, Ashenka, some punch as strong as possible. But you, gentlemen, why are you seated like posts, and why don't you make merry? Can't you make a nice little party for faro?" We thanked the landlord, and begged him to allow us to retire for the night. We had dined very late, and being wearied with the day's adventures, resolved to lie down and sleep, to free ourselves from our landlord's officious hospitality, and escape from being spectators of his noisy merriment. We were shewn into a room in a separate building.

"Glazdooren and his friends are pendulums which check the movements of Russia in her progress towards refinement," said Peter Petróveetch. "There is one benefit derived from their example. Exactly so as at the public table of Sparta drunken Helots were brought thither as a warning to youth of the folly of that vice, we ought to take a lesson from Glazdooren and his fraternity, to warn people who are not yet metamorphosed into beasts by their everlasting sporting, and whose blood has not yet become a quintessence of alcohol."

The whole night was passed in song, noise, and shouting. When the gipseys were wearied, Glazdooren ordered his own huntsmen to sing, and his own

maid-servants and peasant-girls to dance. He lost that night some thousands of roubles, the carriage in which he had promised to send us to the town, and a team of six horses ; but he was in excellent humour and spirits, on account of his having won Veekhory, and celebrated that achievement with greater éclat than the birth of his first-born son. By sun-rise the house was quiet.

We wished to take our departure, though we should not bid adieu to our landlord ; but our *breetchka* was not ready yet, and we were obliged to wait, against our inclination. About mid-day Glazdooren awoke, and we, in going about the court-yard, met him beside the stable. With a hoarse voice he called us to him, and pulled us *vi et armis* into the stable, where we were obliged to listen to a lecture concerning the properties of each horse, while he kissed and beat with his switch them all in their turns. He then took us into the house to breakfast, where we found all the guests with pale faces and red eyes. With shaking hands they took each a dram of coloured vodky and whet, and the strength of the spirit soon braced their weakened nerves. As it was too late for sporting that day, they proposed to have a little horse-racing till dinner time. The landlord and all his guests (except us three) staked a hundred roubles each, and this sum was to be given to the winner. It was resolved in common council, that whosoever gained the prize should after the race set agoing a faro-bank. In the mean time, our *breetchka* was repaired, and we set off without waiting for dinner, which was not ready

at the appointed time ; owing to the cook having been a performer in the domestic choir, and having moistened his throat with little consideration, he was hardly able to stand on his legs in the morning. On resuming his work of cooking, his head was so muddled that he had put into one pot what should have been put into another ; he spoiled, burned, and bungled the whole mess, and for that was put under arrest into the cow-house, while the housekeeper had to make ready another dinner.

On our return to the town we learned from our landlord, that the man of office who had come from Petersburg, had moved heaven and earth to find some pretence for procuring the *Capitan Eespravnik's* dismissal from the service, a secret complaint having been lodged against him by the steward of a person of distinction. The equitable Michael Ivanoveetch had punished this steward for raising illegal imposts on the peasants under his charge. But the *Capitan Eespravnik's* papers were found all in order. The man of office, on leaving the court, being quite out of humour that he had been unable to make a job of it, asked the crowd of townsmen who were gathered about the door, " Are you satisfied with your magistrates ?" " No," replied the mob ; " The police injures us." " What does it to you ?" " It enforces cleanliness."

The man of office could not help laughing at this complaint against the police. Seeing at last that he could make nothing by accusing the *Capitan Eespravnik*, he, having no alternative, took his side and laid the blame upon the steward ; for necessity required

that in proof of his zeal, he should find out who was to blame ; otherwise there would be no end to the affair. The man of office then suddenly changed his mind, and behaved with extreme politeness to all, even to his own landlord the merchant. The *Capitan Eespravnik's* friends undertook to reimburse him for his travelling expenses, of which he complained in a very moving tone, representing at the same time his income as very insufficient. But all this was kept secret from the *Capitan Eespravnik*, who, if he had known of the intention of his friends, would have probably quarrelled with them, and perhaps come to words with the man of office.

Next morning the *Capitan Eespravnik* called upon us, and brought us our passports and post-order for Moscow, and me my money. We embraced the worthy Shtweekoff, who was on his part extremely glad that the affair had ended prosperously. One thing disturbed me. I had written several times to my aunt without receiving any answer. Melancholy forebodings pressed upon my heart, and it was only in the friendship of the kind Meloveeden that I could find relief. At last, after taking leave of the *Capitan Eespravnik*, Peter Petróveetch, the priest and our landlord, and writing a letter of adieu to the respectable Mr. Rossiyanéenoff, we set off for Moscow with post horses, in a carriage bought by us, while the goods were forwarded by carriers.

CHAPTER III.

Story of the old Soldier—Arrival in Moscow—My aunt's history
—I find my mother—A Seducer—Murderers.

ON the road the most unsocial people become intimate with their servants. I and Meloveeden, besides, considered Petroff more in the light of a fellow sufferer in our common misfortunes than as a servant, and behaved to him with great kindness and affection. "Where were you born, Petroff?" Meloveeden asked him one day.—"In the Polish Ukraine," replied he. "I would never have guessed that you came from that country," replied Meloveeden. "You have the real Great-russian accent." "That is owing, your honour, to my apprenticeship with a wig-maker in Petersburg, and entering the service early." "And so you are one of the *dvoroavey** class?" "Yes Sir." "What was your Pan's name?" "I was a serf of a rich Russian lady who had been long settled in the Ukraine." "How did you come to be a soldier?" "I shall tell you if you wish it." "Tell us then." "My father was one of the house-cossacks?" "What does that mean?" inquired I. "The rich proprietors in the

* The household serfs: *dvoroavey* means literally, of or belonging to the *court-yard*, a station which appears to have been allotted, in days of yore, to the higher as well as the lower order of dependants.

Polish Ukraine are in the practice of clothing some of their *droroavey* people in the Cossack costume, and employing them for running errands, making inquiries, performing executions, &c. Our lady had a troop of fifty cossacks, under the command of my father, who had the title of *Asavool* or Captain. These house-cossacks are accoutred, our old people say, exactly in the same style as were in former times the Malo-russian soldiers, wearing wide Turkish trowsers, a jacket, and a sheepskin cap. The cossacks shave the head and wear a long queue from the crown, which they plait behind the ear : this lock of hair they call *oseledetz*. They also shave their beard, but leave long mustachios. For the house-cossacks, it is generally the most active and handsome youths who are preferred. Notwithstanding that it is prohibited, they sometimes arm them with lances, sabres, pistols, and always with *nagaikas*.* The large estates belonging to my lady were all let out to different small proprietors, while the *kartchmas* and drinking shops in the market-towns were farmed by the Jews. The Ukrainesmen are a good, but obstinate people. The Ukraine peasant does not submit to injuries so patiently as he of Lithuania or Byalo-russia. On my lady's estates, the peasants frequently opposed the despotic government of the farmers and their stewards, and the cossacks had always work and a livelihood, in the pacification of the disobedient, and in *executions*, that is to say free quarters at the expense of the pea-

* A heavy whip with a piece of lead plaited into the end of it.

sants, as a punishment for disobedience. The cossacks had also to dun the Jews for their arrears. If my father had been frugal, he might have acquired for himself a tolerably large capital, as his comrades did, many of whom bought their freedom, and their children having been taught to read and write, call themselves *shlyakhtitches*, when they live at some distance from the place of their birth. I met with many of the companions of my childhood in Petersburg: the greater part of them were employed as solicitors in law matters, and they live like Pans. But unfortunately my father was passionately attached to card-playing, and all that he had wrung in the course of a whole year, he would spend at Kief-fair, which he used to frequent on his mistress's business, being sent as a guard upon the cash-box. My father had five sons. The lady selected me with half a hundred other boys to be sent to Petersburg as apprentices to different trades.

“The steward, who took us to Petersburg, was a friend of my father, and on that account put me to learn a light trade, which would also give me an opportunity of ingratiating myself with my masters and mistresses. In my new master's shop I learned roguery and cheating, of which I had no conception before. My father sent orders to have me taught reading and writing on his own account; but I liked cards better than books, and assisted my comrades to cheat our master, in order to have the means of gambling whole nights running. Five years soon passed away, and I was ordered home. I had to undergo a probation in the presence of my lady, and dress the hair of one of the chambermaids

in the newest fashion. But I knew better how to play at ‘the three leaves’,* or ‘the little eagle,’* than to curl hair and form it into tresses. I burned with the curling tongs the girl’s forehead, and spoiled her pretty curls. The lady gave me a brace of cuffs and sent me to the back-yard to wait further orders.

“My lady had not only chests but whole barrels full of silver ; notwithstanding which she never let slip any opportunity of making a kopeek, and did not spend the hundredth part of her immense income.— Although the court-yard was quite full of people, and there also sat at their mistress’s table a number of servants who were *shlyakhtitches* or relations, the lady knew how to feed them all at the least possible expence. Provisions in our part of the country are very cheap, and every thing which was required for their mistress’s table in the shape of fowls, geese, turkeys, butter, eggs, mushrooms, &c. was furnished by the peasants by way of taxes, but under the name of gifts. The wines, sugar, tea, coffee, and kitchen groceries, were also never bought by our lady : the Jews had to furnish that, when they got any lease of *kartchmas* or drinking shops. Our lady was engaged in nothing but receiving and counting money, chequing accounts, and examining her chests. She took a particular pleasure in receiving eggs from the country women. For this purpose she had a particular measure, a wooden bottomless cup, through which she passed the eggs into a tub

* Games at cards played by the common people.

full of water. If the egg did not fill the measure, the peasant woman had to give another to boot.

“ Of the imposts and incomes of different sorts from the property, part of which I do not recollect and part do not know, one was a contrivance of our lady herself, and brought her in a great deal of money. Every peasant’s court-yard had to produce once a-year a horse’s tail, and every peasant girl had at least once in her life to cut her locks and give them to her lady.— The horses’ tails were bought by Russian merchants, but the human hair was sent by a man to Moscow and Petersburg, for sale to the wig-makers, for wigs, necklaces, and false curls. As my mistress knew of no other fault which I possessed but my unskilfulness in fashionable hair-dressing, in a short time I was employed to shear these two-legged sheep and take the hair to the capitals. For some years I performed that office pretty decently, but one day fell in with gamblers and lost three *poods** of the very best hair, among which was a whole *pood* of red which was then in vogue. Not daring to return to my mistress, I skulked about a long time in Petersburg, but at last fell into the hands of the police, as a person without a passport, and was sent to my mistress.

“ At that time there was a levy of recruits, and I was sent for a soldier. The service has cured me of my evil propensities, and maturer years have ripened my power of reflection. After serving ten years credit-

* A *pood* is 40lb Russian weight, or 36lb English.

ably, I was promoted to be a non-commissioned officer. Our regiment was stationed on the line of the Caucasus, where, in an action with the mountaineers, I received a severe wound, and was dismissed the service. I thought of going to Moscow, and taking up the trade of a boot-maker, which I had learned in the service. At the Makarieff fair, a Bukharian merchant engaged me in his service, promising me mountains of gold, and on our arrival at Bokhara, sold me as a slave to an Ozbek, or nobleman of that country. I was obliged to work in the fields like a horse in the hottest weather. I was beaten with sticks when fatigue overpowered me, and fed worse than any domestic animal. At last I grew ill from starvation and exhaustion, and my master gave me in exchange for a bullock to another merchant, who, upon my recovery, took me with him for the purpose of driving camels in the Kirghee-zian *steppe*. I had been with several caravans destined for Russia before my change of fate, but the Bukharian merchants leave their Russian prisoners in the *steppe* with their Kirghee-zian acquaintances, and take them back with them on their return to Bokhara.—Owing to this it is very difficult to save one's self by flight, and I would probably have ended my days amongst these infidels, if they had not fortunately quarrelled among themselves, like dogs for a bone, and if his honour, Ivan Ivanoveetch, had not been among the Kirgheez. It is true there are every where good and bad people, and in Bukharia I have seen good masters, while in our country I have seen masters who

are no better than any Oozbek. But death will make all alike, and then the roll-calls and examinations will follow regularly : some will have gold-lace * and some the stocks. He who has gone through all the hardships of a campaign knows the emptiness of the world. On the bivouacs the same quantity of wood which warms a soldier warms a general, and no more ground than a man's length is required for sleeping. Whether it be dry black bread which is in the stomach, or a dainty tart, it is all the same, provided a man have enough ; but when it comes to the parting of the leaden nuts, all have an equal share. The main affair is to have a clear conscience, a healthy constitution—yes, and a passport in your bosom. There is plenty of bread and work in Russia.”

At last we saw the steeples of Moscow, and embraced each other in silence. I was, as it were, in a fever ; and when the barrier arose before us, the tears trickled from my eyes. We alighted at a tavern, and, as it was not yet very late, each of us, hiring a droshky, went in search of our friends. Meloveeden burned with impatience to learn what had become of his wife, the Count and Countess Tzeetereen, and his uncle. I went in search of my aunt. At her former lodgings nobody knew whither she had removed, or what had become of her. I also did not find Vorovaateen in his old lodgings. His landlord told me that Vorovaateen, on his return from Orenburg, sold all his effects, and left Moscow nobody knew whither. He advised me to inquire at the

* Trimmings of galloon are assigned as rewards to the Russian soldiers.

police about my aunt. I returned in very low spirits, and found Meloveeden in still lower. The Count and Countess Tzeetereen were dead ; their son, the captain, whom he supposed to be killed, was only severely wounded, had recovered, and succeeded to his parents' property. Of his wife, Meloveeden could get no intelligence, except that she did not return to Moscow. His uncle had at last retired from the service, and ceased to subscribe, "*Faithfully copied from the original,*" and settled in Kíef with his housekeeper, who was as much attached to him as a chronic distemper. Her daughter had married one of those husbands who spend their youth in hunting for brides among the élevées of rich people, or the housekeepers of old bachelors. Meloveeden had not a kopeek in the world, nor any hopes of money to come. I made him an offer of my purse, and for the meantime gave him a hundred ducats. That was some consolation to his grief. Next day I went to the head quarters of the police, and found one of the gentlemen in that office who undertook to inquire after my aunt's residence. Orders were sent to all the overseers of police to give notice whether Madam Baritono lived in their district. Reports were sent in from all the police offices, "that, in such a ward, the said Baritono has no residence." Next day, after receiving these reports, a *valet de place*, whom I also employed to seek for my aunt, acquainted me that she lived within twenty paces of the tavern where I lodged, in a house belonging to the police-overseer's wife, and ad-

joining to the very house of the police-inspector, who had drawn up a report for his district, that Madam Baritono did not live there.

I flew to my aunt. Up a dirty stair-case I went into the gallery, or, properly speaking, under the shed of a second floor, and could hardly grope my way to the end of it for barrels, tubs, buckets, and iron and earthen pots. I opened a door which led into a dark kitchen ; a tattered old woman looked upon me with astonishment, and made a low obeisance to me. " Does Adelaida Petróna Baritono live here ? " " Here master ! " My heart palpitated, my limbs shook : I opened the door into the room. My God ! what a spectacle ! In a small cell with a single window, on a dirty bed, lay a woman with a swelled face, covered with red spots. An old cloak was thrown over her, and her head was bound up with a handkerchief which had lost its colour. She looked at me with unmoved eyes, raised herself, opened her mouth in order to say something, and was silent. " Is that you, aunt ? " exclaimed I, and threw myself about her ; but she fell down on her pillow and shut her eyes. A tremor diffused itself over her, a cold sweat came upon her face, and her mouth distorted itself from nervous agitation. I thought she was dying, and in despair did not know what to do. The *valet de place* was with me, waiting in the gallery. I ran to him, ordered him immediately to call a doctor, and returned to assist my aunt. The old cook in the meantime ran to her neighbour the Kvartálny Nádzeeratl's* wife, who came imme-

* Police-inspector:

diately with a smelling bottle, and by her exertions brought my aunt to her senses. A copious flow of tears ensued, and that relieved her heart. "Vanya," said she at last ; "and so you have not forgotten me !" I answered only with my tears. "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast permitted me once more in my life to press to my heart him who is the dearest to me of all in the world," said my aunt. "Good Vanya, you have found me in poverty and disease : I have deserved it, and do not blame Providence. He has been kind to me in restoring me you. I shall now die in peace !"

The worthy neighbours left us, and I, on coming a little to myself, cast my eyes around this receptacle of poverty. The walls of the cell were as black as a smithy. The window was composed of fragments of different sorts of glass, and was in some places patched up with sugar-loaf paper. A fir table, two chairs, and a small chest, formed all the furniture. A lamp burned in a corner before a sacred picture. On the window stood an earthen tea-pot without a lid, a white earthen cup, a tumbler, a pitcher containing drink, and a tallow candle stuck into a bottle. After looking at all the property, I pressed my aunt to my bosom. I do not recollect what I said, but I wept bitterly. At last, being a little quieted, I went to look out for her a fit lodging, leaving with her my pocket-book, with money to pay the doctor and for medicines.

The same evening my aunt was removed into a clean and well furnished suit of rooms, and found in commodious every thing necessary for her immediate wants, besides

a clean bed, cooking utensils, a table-service, silver-plate, and an active maid-servant to wait upon her, a skilful cook, and a clever footman. I remained in the meantime in the tavern with Meloveeden, who participated in my joy, and took the task upon himself of seeking out and furnishing the rooms, as well as buying every thing wanted (of course at my expense,) for my aunt. He was a thorough master of that, having ruined himself several times and set up again.

In a fortnight my aunt recovered from her illness, and the physicians declared that the danger was over. She was even able to go about the room. I did not choose to relate my adventures to her, for fear of doing her harm by bringing on fresh agitation upon her feelings. At last when her strength was recovered, I related to her every thing which had happened to me after my departure from Moscow, and concluded my relation with a request that she would explain to me the cause of the questions and suspicions of Vorovaa-teen regarding my father, and the persecution of the unknown Countess. My aunt mused a little, and at last threw herself about my neck and wept. "Vanya," said she, "I wish to lay open to you my soul, in which lies hid the secret of my whole life. Look not down upon me, but pity one who has been unfortunate. I am the victim of thoughtlessness and vanity. Listen !

"You do not perhaps know that in Byalo-russia there are many villages or *Slobóds* which are inhabited by people from different parts of Russia, mostly of the sect of *Old-believers*, who had retired thither when it formed a part of Poland, to escape from persecu-

tion in Russia. There is one Russian *Slobód* about ten versts distant from the estate of Mr. Gologorodoffsky. In that *Slobód* lived an opulent peasant named Peter Sevastiánoff, surnamed Krutogólov, who, by trading in linen, flax, and bristles, and following the profession of a carrier, had acquired a decent competency. He was a widower, and his sister Axeenya managed his house. He had two children, a daughter Doonya, aged sixteen, and a son Vaséely, nineteen years of age. This Doonya was—myself!”

“How, you, aunt!” exclaimed I in astonishment: “with such an education and such an address! It is hard to believe that— — — And so I belong to a peasant-family,” added I, blushing, and casting down my eyes. “But I am your nephew by a sister, and you say that you had no sister. How can that be?” “Be patient and hear me out,” said my aunt: “and be not ashamed of your origin. We have no choice of our parents; but it depends upon yourself to ennoble your birth. Hear me out patiently to the end of my story, and then say and do what you please.

“In our neighbourhood was quartered a Hussar regiment, of which a squadron lay in our village, which was commanded by Prince Meeloslavsky as captain. He was fresh from the guards, and astonished not only us but even the neighbouring gentry, by the richness of his equipages, the beauty of his horses, and the amount of his expenses. The prince was a handsome youth about twenty-five years of age, affable to all, of an amorous temperament and given to gallantry. He made all the young women of the village

presents of ribbands, beads, and sweetmeats, bowed to them all politely, played at the *Khóroródee*,* treated the peasants to vodky, and paid for all in ready money. He was loved by all in the village, old as well as young. I was the only one to whom he made no presents and never spoke. I was timorous, and the Prince appeared not so free with me alone. Every day he rode or walked past my windows, alighted purposely from his horse, as if it were to arrange something, or stopped apparently to speak with my father, but really to have an opportunity of ogling me. However simple country girls may be, they are not so dull but they can read in the eyes of a lover as if it were in a book, and experience is not wanted before a girl can guess with what intention men gaze at her. I had no doubt but the Prince rode and walked past our house for the sole purpose of seeing me, and if I left the window and hid myself behind the gate, he would turn twenty times beside our house in order only to have a glance at me. But I was quite chagrined that, notwithstanding his affability to others, he never spoke a word to me. To tell the truth, I did not understand then what was the meaning of love, but it put me in good spirits when I looked on the Prince, and I was much out of humour when I did not see him for some days or even for a single morning. I frequently dreamed that I saw him with his fair face and black mustachios, and when it happened in my dream that he kissed me, which I much desired, I was all the following day cheerful and

* Similar to the old Scotch bolster-dance.

contented. In our village there were many handsome and agreeable youths, but all their faces appeared to me intolerable, and I found pleasure only in contemplating two faces, viz. my own in my little looking-glass, and that of the Prince. It was not my little looking-glass alone which told me that I was a beauty. All our young peasants, all the officers and landholders' sons who put up at our house when they chanced to be hunting, repeated to me one and the same thing, and for fifty versts round I was known under the name of "*the pretty peasant girl.*"

"My father was very strict and harsh in his behaviour towards me : he was a zealous *old-believer*, and would have turned me out of doors if he had known that I looked on a man who did not belong to his sect. He repeated that to me several times. The prince knew of my father's strictness and his inveterate prejudices, and on that account avoided meeting me, contenting himself with tender looks. About half a year passed on in this way ; the Prince left all his acquaintances, all his employments, and secluded himself in the village, finding no other earthly pleasure but that of seeing me several times in the course of the day, on the street or through the window. My thoughts were also entirely upon the Prince, and his image hovered continually before my eyes day and night. Summer arrived. My father went to the town in the way of business, and I remaining under the inspection of my aunt, asked permission one day to go with my companions to the wood for berries. We separated in the wood, and I, singing a mournful song and thinking of

the Prince, was plucking berries, when, on a sudden, I heard a rustling among the bushes ; I sighed for fear, and wished to run away ; the branches opened, the Prince appeared, and I involuntarily kept my place ! “ My dear Doonya, I love thee ! ” said the Prince on coming up to me. I was silent, stood motionless, but was sensible that my knees shook, and that my cheeks were burning. “ Doonya, I shall die if you will not love me ! ” I still kept silence. “ Yes, look at me, ” said the Prince. I lifted my eyes, looked at him, and was obliged to wipe them with my sleeve, perceiving that they were full of tears. The Prince took me by the hand, seated me beside him on the trunk of a tree, and entered into a conversation with me. The hand which was held by the Prince sent vibrations through all my frame, and my heart beat so strongly that I heard its palpitations, and felt as if I was in a fever. The Prince spoke a long time to me, and caressed me, and at last, when he ventured to kiss me, my eyes lost their power of seeing. I thought I would die on the spot from agitation, and threw myself into the Prince’s arms. - - - -

“ We did not long enjoy our forgetfulness ; days passed on, and with them expired our joy. I soon perceived that nature designed me for a mother, and almost at the same time, the regiment received orders to march against the Turks. Where was I to hide my shame ? How escape my father’s strictness ?

“ In one day, without warning, the whole village learned with astonishment that the pretty Doonya had disappeared from her father’s house. I behaved my-

self so cautiously, that no one suspected me of voluntary flight. The news were also spread, as if I had been carried away by force and murdered. Suspicions fell on the Prince, and on many of the neighbouring landholders. My father did not search for me, and other people talked about it for a while, and then dropped it.

“ Fifty versts from our village, in a secluded place in the middle of a wood, was a *kartchma*. In the neighbouring town, the Jew who kept that *kartchma* was recommended to the Prince, as an honest, discreet, and serviceable man, who might be depended upon for every thing. The Prince deposited me there, appointing to take care of me an old woman who called herself a mid-wife; gave me a casket of jewels belonging to him, and amongst them two miniatures of himself which you have seen with me, and ten thousand roubles in bank-notes. The Prince ordered me, as soon as I should recover after my lying in, to proceed with the child to Moscow and wait his return, leaving me his address in the parish of John the forerunner, in the Kretchetueekie.*

“ The prince went to join his regiment, promising solemnly to provide for my future happiness, and forbidding me to forsake the child. On parting from the Prince, I thought I should part with life itself.

“ I had a room for myself in a retired part of the house. The woman appointed to take care of me had a closet adjoining. The whole of the Jew’s fa-

* A street in Moscow.

mily paid me the greatest attention. The landlord himself passed for a doctor, and practised among the small country-gentry of the neighbourhood. At last I brought a son into the world— — — Vanya ! You are my son, and Prince Meeloslavsky's !”

I started from my chair.— “ How ! You my mother !” exclaimed I, with strong agitation of feelings. My mother sat without moving, and covering her face with her hands, wept. I threw myself into her arms, and we mingled our tears together.

“ My son,” said my mother, “ load me not with curses, spurn me not. I followed a natural propensity, and all the fault lies on him who, by the strength of his mind and command over his temper, might have kept me from transgression. But he is no longer in the land of the living — — — — let us respect his memory. His head was to blame, but not his heart !” When we grew a little more composed, my mother continued her history.

“ Thou knowest that thou wast born with a growth on thy left arm, which was cauterized by my landlord the jew-doctor. In other respects thou wast healthy and strong. I had already begun to recover from my illness, and intended soon to set off for Moscow ; but a frightful proceeding separated me from thee.

“ The midwife who had charge of me, notwithstanding her attention and kindness, had something in her appearance which I could not bear. Her countenance which was covered with wrinkles, had a strong expression of malice and envy. Every time that our eyes met, I trembled all over ; I endeavoured to avoid

her presence, and spent my time alone in my room with thee or with thy father's miniature. One autumn evening I was troubled with a headache and went early to bed ; but feeling an intolerable heat about me, I rose up and went into the fresh air. Standing with my back to the wall, not far from the window of the landlord's room, I heard my name pronounced. I went nearer the window and overheard a conversation which almost deprived me of my senses.

" I have examined the creature's chest," said the midwife, " and found in it unspeakable riches. Whole bunches of white-notes,* whole handfuls of gold-rings and precious stones !" " Well, canst thou not take them and run away, and we shall conceal thee," said the Jew. " I can't," replied the old woman. I have in the town a family, children, and grand children. The creature will find some one to write to the Prince, and he is a friend of the Marshal, of the Gorodneetchy, (the Mayor,) and even of the Governor : it will then be a bad job for me !" " Well, but canst thou not get rid of the girl," said the Jew. " That would be the best of all," replied the old woman. " Here all is empty and quiet. If we dispatch the girl to the other world, and throw her child any where, we can help ourselves to the money and things, and the ends are in the water. Even let the Prince come, we can say that she set off for Moscow ; let him seek her where he can find her. The dead tell no tales !"

* The Russian assignats are of different colours, but those for large sums are white.

“Excellent, excellent, Vaseeleesa!” said the Jew, “but when shall we fall to work?” “Why should we delay?” replied the old woman. “She is unwell to-day and is now asleep; take you the axe, give her a knock on the head, then bag the body and into the lake with it.” “Thou art right; why should we put it off? Go then to her door, and I shall bring the axe and immediately dispatch her.”

“You may easily imagine in what a state of mind I was, when I heard this hellish consultation. Quite beside myself, I ran with all my might to the wood, and notwithstanding the cold, wet weather, in the darkness of the night, succeeded in hiding myself among the bushes. Quite exhausted, I lay down under a tree and came a little to myself. I reproached myself for having left thee in the hands of the murderers; but after some consideration, my spirits were calmed. I was almost persuaded that they would not venture to murder thee, when they saw that I had escaped their toils. I resolved to go to the government-town, to reveal all to the Governor, who, as I had heard, was a friend of the Prince, and beg him to cause my son to be restored to me, and forward me to Moscow. I had on a large handkerchief about my head and a short-sleeved jacket. After praying to God Almighty, I fell asleep under a tree.”

CHAPTER IV.

Conclusion of the history of Adelaida Petróvna.—Marriage.—Education remodelled.—Free life.—Ruinous consequences of thoughtlessness.—I enter the world.—Visiting.

“ AT day break I awoke from cold, and continued to go through the wood without finding any road. I was tormented with thirst ; but the strong nervous agitation put a period to my illness. After drinking some rain-water out of a bog, I felt myself stronger and more courageous than before. But recollecting that thou wast left without a nurse, I wept bitterly, and committed thee to the care of Him who cares for the unfledged birds and the unfortunate orphans. With some occasional intervals of repose, I continued my journey as far as my strength would permit me, and by mid-day had reached the main road. Fearing pursuit, I did not dare to go along the open road, but went under cover of the wood. On a sudden I heard the tinkling of a bell. I looked through the bushes, and perceiving that in a *breetchka*, drawn by four horses, there sat a gentleman with his footman, I ran towards the road, fell upon my knees, and clasping my hands, cried out : “ Save, save an unfortunate creature from death ! ” The *breetchka* stopped ; the gentleman alighted, came up to me, and proceeded to question me. I related to him all my story, and

prostrating myself at his feet, entreated his assistance and protection. The gentleman was touched with my youth and misfortune ; he seated me beside himself in the carriage, and we proceeded to the town.

“ My deliverer was a native of Italy, and his name, Baritono. He had been a teacher of music and *kapelmeister* in the house of a rich landholder ; and after a stay of six years in the country, was returning to Moscow with a small capital, in order to resume his former employment of giving lessons. Baritono was an elderly man, upwards of forty, but of an agreeable exterior and cheerful temper. He spoke Russian pretty well, and did all he could to comfort me. On arriving at the government-town, he called upon the Governor, and related to him my adventures. The Governor was a worthy and just man ; he wished to see me personally, and was also, like Baritono, captivated with my appearance, and touched with my misfortune. He immediately dispatched an officer to take into custody the Jew and midwife, and to procure immediately my son and all my property. But probably owing to the indiscretion of the postillion in whose hearing I had related my adventure to Baritono, the Jew had got notice of my deliverance. The officer found the *kartchma* evacuated. The Jew’s family and the midwife had disappeared with thee and all the property ; and I heard no more of thee !

“ Baritono took me with him to Moscow, and behaved towards me as an affectionate father to his daughter. He wrote a letter to the army, to Prince Meeloslavsky ; but in place of an answer, we received

the letter back, with the news that the Prince had fallen in battle. Baritono did not wish to part with me. He called me Adelaida, hired teachers for me, and undertook himself to teach me music. In the course of five years I learned to read and write my mother-tongue, acquired a knowledge of French and Italian, and could dance, sing, and play on the piano-forte. Nature is so liberal to the Russian people, that it did not require great exertions to educate me. I loved reading, and grew soon acquainted with all which an accomplished woman requires to know. Baritono was proud of what he had done, and all his friends were astonished at my address, comprehension, and talents. I had many adorers, but gratitude attached me to my deliverer. He made me an offer of his hand, and I cheerfully consented to be his wife, that I might, by my gratitude, recompense my benefactor in some degree for all his cares over me.

“Baritonowas a worthy man, and loved me tenderly. I could not be in love with him, but was attached to him, and fulfilled all the duties of a wife with the greatest devotion. In the mean time my husband, wearied of running about the town for tickets, and of quarrelling with his pupils and their parents about the payment of his fees, and also feeling that his health was declining, thought of opening a magazine for Nuremberg goods,* and giving up teaching. He expended all his small capital in furnishing his shop and purchasing goods ; but as he had no credit, being a novice

* Toys and trinkets.

in trade, and as he was not up to all the turnings and windings of his new calling, our trade soon died a natural death. Baritono was so vexed at this, that he was taken ill of a fever, and died also.

“ My condition was now any thing but pleasant. I was left with a thousand roubles saved out of all his capital, without any hopes in the future, without a friend and without a protector. The circle of my female acquaintance was confined to some foreigners, shopkeepers, and actresses. Of the gentlemen I knew none, except some musicians and countrymen of my husband. But I was known by all the lovers of the fair sex, who pursued me in crowds on the promenades, withdrew not an eye from my box in the theatre, and were continually passing before my windows. I had a multitude of unknown adorers. Some of them even in my husband's lifetime sent me letters, all of which I delivered unopened to my husband ; others employed women of their acquaintance as love-brokers, but at the first word I silenced these officious friends, and in that way justly passed for a modest woman, which is a rare occurrence under similar circumstances. After Baritono's death, my female friends and the friends of my husband advised me, or, properly speaking, insisted that I should avail myself of a benefit which was offered by generous people who were burning with love towards me. Not seeing any thing better within my reach, and after listening to anecdotes of illustrious families, who nevertheless enjoyed considerable reputation in the world, I thought it was reconcileable with the fitness of things, and agreed

to accept the offer of Prince Tchvanoff, who did not ask me for love, but only for permission to love me, and for that, so to say, gave me my weight in gold. You knew that good old man. He spent all his income on the sex, from mere vain glory to pass for a man of gallantry ! Amidst all his weaknesses and singularities he had a good heart, and if he had been alive, I would not have been reduced to the extremities in which you found me.

“ Knowing neither the value of money nor the want of it, I spent all that came into my hands. On receiving money, I considered it my duty immediately to spend it, and knew of no other expences except those necessary for dress and show. By the elegance of my dress I thought to hide the secret of my conduct ; and the respect which was shewn to the splendour of my dress and equipage, consoled me for the petty disgusts which I experienced in public assemblies from the proud looks of married women, who, protected by their husband’s name, like a screen, find fault with others for what they secretly do themselves.

“ Having no acquaintances amongst whom I might spend my time, I formed a male circle of acquaintance among the most agreeable and amiable people of the metropolis. You have been present at our musical *soirees*, Vanya ; therefore I need not describe them. Being still young, I could not confine myself to the half-platonic love of Prince Tchvanoff, and consequently, at first, for amusement, and afterwards from habit, I sought attachments of the heart. Semen Semenovetch Plaiseereen promised to marry me as soon

as Prince Tchvanoff fulfilled his engagements and bettered his condition. But Prince Tchvanoff's own affairs were far from prosperous ; a part of his property was pledged, and the rest contested at law, so that notwithstanding his good wishes, he had it not in his own power to carry them into effect. Semen Semenovetch introduced to me Grabeelen, that rich old lawyer, who, by his rudeness and pretensions, made my life intolerable. After your departure for Orenburg, I resolutely declined his friendship, and intended to marry a poor industrious painter who was desperately in love with me, when, on a sudden, a violent illness obliged me to keep my bed. I was attacked with the natural small-pox, and so violently, that my whole body was covered with scurf. I grew delirious and lost my senses, of which opportunity the hard-hearted lawyer, Grabeelen, availed himself to deprive me of what remained of my property. Semen Semenovetch, one of those subalterns who are always in quest of females connected one way or other with people of rank and wealth, in order to obtain their patronage—Semen Semenovetch was the first to leave me in my poverty. Another friend, the Abbé Pretatout, also cut my acquaintance, and I would have died without any assistance, if a Russian lady, who had formerly taken offence at me because her husband frequented my *soirees*, had not had pity upon me. The landlord of the house would not allow me to remain without paying my rent ; so I was taken during my illness into that room where you saw me, and thrown upon the mercy of providence. The lady already mentioned,

learning my condition, sent me some money and her own doctor, and hired a woman to take care of me ; but being far from rich herself, she could not do much for me. In the midst of this misery it pleased Almighty God to send me assistance and consolation in the person of thee, my son ! I have for ever lost my beauty, and with it my vanity and thoughtlessness, which were the causes of my errors. I shall now turn into the road of repentance, and by love to God and love to my son, fill the emptiness of my heart. Vanya, my son, nothing can be more unfortunate than a woman who has regarded beauty as her only value, and availed herself of it like merchandise, for the purpose of momentary gratifications. I now feel that in full measure. What would I have been at present, if God had not sent thee to me ?” My mother, after finishing her story, threw herself upon her knees before the sacred picture, and prayed in tears. The prayers lightened her heart, and she grew easier.

“ My dear mother,” said I, “ let us forget the past, and confine our thoughts to the present and future. In your narrative I have not found the key to the secret of my persecution. I have harmed no one : now, who can that countess be, who so ardently desires my destruction ? Had you no female adversary ?” “ Many women of rank have been irritated at me,” replied my mother ; “ but I do not think that any of them would have chosen to revenge themselves upon me by the destruction of my nephew. The secret of your birth is known to me alone. Not one of my former enemies could have the least idea that you were

my son. Indeed I cannot make out the cause of this countess's enmity against thee. May it not be a mistake."

In two months' time my mother was completely recovered ; but her beauty had departed for ever. Her face was covered with deep pits and furrows ; her hair in some places had grown grey ; her eyes had no longer the liveliness of former days, and her well-turned figure had lost its elasticity. My mother looked ten years older than she actually was. The loss of her external charms led her into the road to wisdom. She became pious, and dressed in black from top to toe, spending her whole time in church, and in the reading of godly books.

In the meantime my merchandise arrived in Moscow, and I immediately sold it. I realized about forty thousand roubles ready money, and hired a small but neat lodging, divided into two halves : in one half lived my mother, and in the other myself with Meloveeden : Petroff remained with me in the capacity of valet. We passed our time very modestly—Meloveeden continually writing letters to all corners of Russia, in order to learn the fate of his wife of whom he had hitherto got no account ; I, searching for Vorovaateen, in hopes of finding out the name of my enemy the countess. We walked about and read together, philosophized, and formed plans for the future, and, to speak the truth, wearied ; Meloveeden having been accustomed to the dissipation of high life, while my soul required activity. Some friends recognized Meloveeden and found out his place of residence : on further

consideration, seeing him decently dressed and spending money at the taverns and coffee-houses, they began to call upon us. Speaking about former connexions and the great world, excited in Meloveeden a fresh itching to return to his former circle of acquaintance.

“I say, Vejeeghen,” said Meloveeden one day to me ; “you wish to enter the service in order to obtain some standing in the world. It is laudable ! In this country a man *comme il faut*, without a rank, is almost the same as in other countries without a passport. But it is difficult to get any thing of this sort without patronage. Where the men have the power, the women exercise it ; and where the women have the power, the men exercise it. You must seek it amongst the ladies, my dear friend. For entering into the world you have two important qualifications—money and an agreeable exterior. You have more knowledge than is wanted in the great world. The French language and dancing is quite enough for that purpose ; but besides that, you are a musician and play games of skill well. All these qualities united form the highest pitch of wisdom among people of that distinguished circle, to whom they open a road to the first dignities in the empire. You only want that address, that self-confidence, which is attained by frequenting the higher circles of society : but these qualities you may soon pick up, with such a mind and spirit as yours. You will do well if you attend to what I say, and make your entry into the world. I shall introduce you to one or two dozens of my aunts and cousins, and to some full-weight law-givers of first-rate society : with the youth you will

find no trouble in getting acquainted. Say aye to every thing which the old men say, play whist and boston with the old women ; never fall into a passion at cards, and do not ask payment for debts of honour ; give treats to the young people, and participate in their pleasures ; never enter into a dispute, but agree always with the majority in the company of your comrades, with the landlord in his own house, and with every individual by himself. Originate no scandal yourself, and defame no one, but hear it all patiently, repeat it with circumspection, always omitting the names ; amuse the company with fictions, and never tell the truth when you can avoid it ; praise every thing belonging to others, and cry down every thing of your own ; call all babblers sensible, all men in public stations active and industrious, all judges honourable, all rich men beneficent, all elderly ladies good, all young women and girls beauties, all children cupids and geniuses. Get a thorough knowledge of the name's-days, and birth-days of all the people of your acquaintance, and do not neglect visiting. Learn to laugh till you cry, when you are told any wearisome story on pretence of its being funny, and learn to make wry faces when any one confides his grief to you. When you move forward, make it appear as if you always stood back, and that you are doing it in spite of yourself. Ascribe all your success to others, and thank every body. Bear patiently small mortifications, but take your revenge by means of a third party. Make your requests always for others, and get others to request for you.

Never refuse any thing to any one: promise every thing to all, and afterwards make your excuse by the impossibility of getting it performed, seeming at the same time as if you did every thing which depended upon you, though you actually did nothing.

“Recollect these instructions of mine, and believe, that if you follow them implicitly, you will excel all the courtiers in the world, and your wishes will be crowned with success !”

I revealed to my friend Meloveeden the secret of my birth. My heart wanted to be relieved of its burden by sharing it with a confidential friend. We took counsel with my mother, and she blessed me again on entering a new career. “You will meet perhaps with your own relations in the world,” said Meloveeden : “but as you have no proof of your being the son of Prince Meeloslavsky, and as your father left you nothing, that can be of ~~no~~ service to you, and may be even against you ; I shall introduce you into the world under the name of a Russian gentleman holding property under a patent in the Byalo-russian provinces. The Russian families in general who have settled in the newly acquired provinces, have few connections in the two metropolitan cities ; they will take it upon trust. Even those who regard you as the nephew of Adelaida Petrovna, and have seen you in her house, know nothing of your or of her origin. They doubtless know that Adelaida Petrovna lives now in a solitary condition, and that you maintain her at your own expense. That will confirm them still more in the belief of your assumed rank. Besides,

my dear friend, it is only in the lower classes of the community that people are inquisitive and curious with respect to others. In the higher classes every one thinks of himself, and does not trouble himself about another, if he does not stand in his way."

At last the day came that was appointed for visiting. I hired a carriage with four horses, dressed a footman in livery with gold lace, and set out. On the way, Meloveeden said to me: "We shall begin with the countess Protroobeen. She is the prima donna among the Moscow old women, and half a hundred screamers follow her notes. You must observe that this choir have power given them over the reputation of young people in general, but particularly those in the married state. Here is her house: do you see what a display of carriages stands before the door? It is not so dangerous to offend the government itself as these harpies, who are ready, for the smallest neglect, to tear in pieces the good character of any decent man."

"She receives!" said the Swiss who was busy mending boots in his little closet. We entered into a hall which had been painted half a century before. Around the walls stood huge chairs, covered with slips of bunting, and in the corner a large Dutch clock with a carved oaken case. "Pozyálweetay," ("please,")* bawled the valet, opening the folding-doors into the drawing-room. We entered. The countess, a woman advanced in years, sat bent together on a sofa, sup-

* 'To enter,' understood.

ported by pillows embroidered by her nieces and *elevées*. Under her feet was also a large embroidered pillow. On her knees rested a lap-dog, which peeped out from under her shawl. On a small table before her lay china-cups with visiting cards, a snuff-box, and a hand-bell. In a semi-circle of arm-chairs sat a number of ladies and gentlemen. "How do you do, aunt?" said Meloveeden, kissing her hand—"From whence, master?" asked the countess, raising her head, and looking stedfastly at Meloveeden. "From distant countries, aunt, and I thought it my first duty to call upon you." "Thank'ye, that you have not forgot." "Allow me, aunt, to recommend to your patronage a friend of mine, a Byalo-russian landed proprietor, Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen, to whom I am under great obligations." The countess looked at me, and nodded her head, which I acknowledged with a bow. "I am happy to see you; always glad to see worthy people. I beg you will be seated. Are you alone in Moscow, or with your wife?" asked the countess, pointing to Meloveeden. "Alone, aunt. My wife remained abroad on account of the weakness of her health." "So much the better that you are alone. But where do you serve?" said the countess, turning to me. "I am only now thinking of entering the service," replied I; "I have been studying the sciences till the present time." "Ah, you are one of the literati then: I understand you," added the countess, taking a pinch of snuff. "But how many souls have you," asked she. Meloveeden did not give me time to answer, but said, "Fifteen

hundred." "And how many children have your parents?" asked the countess. "He is the only one, and his own master," replied Meloveeden. "That is not bad," muttered the countess, and took another pinch of snuff. I looked at the other visitors, and observed that the mothers whispered to their daughters, that the daughters put themselves into a more erect posture, raised their eyes, cast side-glances, leaned the head with a graceful air on the shoulders, and those who had good teeth, smiled.

"Fifteen hundred souls for a single man is pretty tolerable," said the countess to herself, rubbing her snuff-box. "What is his surname? pardon the question." "Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen," repeated Meloveeden with a loud and drawling voice. I again noticed that all the visitors moved their lips, as if it were to repeat my name to their memory. "I dine every day at home," said the countess, "and except two days in the week and any extraordinary occasions, I receive visitors every evening. It will be agreeable to me to see you at my house, Ivan Ivanoveetch. I have no occasion to give a fresh invitation to you, Alexander: you must be domesticated with me till you again break loose. Meloveeden again kissed the countess's hand, and I broke out with such a well-turned compliment, that the countess even nodded her head in token of approbation, and took another pinch of snuff as a mark of her satisfaction. "The business is finished," whispered Meloveeden to me: "they will all sing now in the same note. And so it actually happened." "Alexander Ivanoveetch!" said

to Meloveeden a fat elderly woman, highly rouged, and wearing an immense cap which almost covered her eye-brows ; “ Is it long since you dismounted from your high horse, that you do not know your old acquaintances ? ” “ Have mercy upon me, Ma’am,” replied Meloveeden : “ I bowed to you, and being engaged in conversation with her highness, had not time to turn towards you, to testify my respect, intending besides to have that pleasure in your own house.” “ Very well,” added the fat woman : “ I beg you will not forsake us as you did formerly, but favour us with a visit, along with your friend.” I fired off another compliment, and the fat woman made a grimace, which probably some flatterer would have called a friendly smile. Meloveeden knew all the guests. Introductions began, and we were invited during this first visit to dine every day and spend every evening with them all. In half an hour I made eleven acquaintances.

“ There are many changes since you left Moscow,” said the countess to Meloveeden. “ Your cousin Ashenka has married a rich man in a public situation. Cousin Poleen has parted with her husband, who lost his place of custom-house director. Cousin Kate was upon the brink of matrimony with a colonel : every thing was already arranged, when the confounded slanderous tongue of Kookooshkeen broke up the affair, and she palmed upon the young man her own precious niece, who has no earthly good quality but her money. But you know that a well-educated man *comme il faut* does not marry for money,” added she, casting a look

at me. "Is n't it true, Ivan Ivanoveetch?" "Pecuniary calculation in matrimony is a property of low minds," said I. "How wise!" exclaimed the fat lady, looking to her daughters. "Sensible and clever," apostrophized a thin lady, beside whom sat four stout girls. "You all said that my grandson, Koko, would not be a bungler," said the countess to Meloveeden: "but we gave him a handsome launch into the world. He is upon particular duty under Prince Svazeen in Petersburg, and is already a *Titular*, and this year received a cross in consequence of a journey to Moscow with some Secretary or Procureur on an investigation. It was a pity that he did not come here till the end of the investigation, otherwise he might have got something more. We reserve him for a *Kammer-Yunker*. Prince Svazeen is now in power, and he is *his* man. Some of these days I intend to send him my grandson Jaques, son of the unfortunate Blagoródoff, who it is said went out of his reason, settled in the country, and refused promotion. Jaques, thank God, is not like his father. He is a fine young fellow, and wishes to serve in the foreign college, and knows his business. On my name's-day he composed two sheets of French couplets which were sung by three of my grand-daughters. At last ball he astonished us all at a mazourka, and besides that, he is a prodigy of learning; as they say, he knows orthography and mythology: he will be a man yet! But of his aunt, the countess Nicodem, they speak very ill. I do not like to repeat bad news, but they say that she has connexions - - - you understand? She has given

up visiting me. God be with her ! Yes, and the ex-governor, your relation Dobrodyéloff, has also ceased visiting here. Notwithstanding his friends cry up his integrity—it is not all who believe it. I have a pretty shrewd guess, that, when people give up calling upon me, they are sensible all is not right with them. I do not like to tell tales, but I know what I know !” The countess took a pinch of snuff, and continued to dilate upon the merits of all her relations and acquaintances ; but Meloveeden availed himself of a momentary pause, rose, and we left the room.

“ May the Lord preserve us from this woman’s tongue,” said Meloveeden, on taking his seat in the carriage : “ she has assumed power over the fourth part of the community of Moscow, and all who only keep at a distance from her and do not bow the knee before her, she tries by martial law as deserters, hands over to her court of cronies, passes sentence upon them, and punishes by deprivation of their good name. By her tongue and connexions she has made herself terrible to many people who occupy important situations, and they must comply with her wishes in order to escape slander and all sorts of underhand attacks. You must flatter her, and she will procure you a situation. The fifteen hundred souls and Byalo-russian nobility, with which I have presented you, will tell.”

We stopped before a large house, and Meloveeden said : “ I will now introduce you to one of the leaders of the *old men* of Moscow, whose name is pronounced with as great reverence as that of the Delphic oracle in days of yore. Antippus Yermoláyevetch for-

merly held an important situation, and, although events took the same course then as now and always, he is persuaded that from the time that he retired from the service, the sun shines more dimly on Russia, that the moon is not so clear, and that the country is on the brink of destruction. Every thing done both in and out of the empire he condemns, and says that he could have done it better, although unluckily he never did any thing well in his life, except resigning. According to him, except himself and his contemporaries, his friends and patrons, there have been no men of abilities in Russia. If he did not give dinners and balls no body would mind what he said ; but as he congregates so many people about him, as the phrase is, he has his weight. He may be of use to you."

We were admitted. Antippus Yermoláyeveetch was in his cabinet. He was seated in a large arm-chair, in a green velvet morning-gown, trimmed with sable, and ornamented with two stars. " Ah, my old friend, where are you come from ? " said he to Meloveeden. " I have been travelling, and, on my return to Moscow, deemed it my first duty to wait upon your Excellency. " " Thank'ye, thank'ye, my good friend ! " " Allow me to introduce to you my friend Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen, a Russian nobleman who has an estate with fifteen hundred souls in Byalorussia. " " A pretty god-send. But where did your father serve, and what rank did he hold ? " " Colonel in the army, " replied Meloveeden. " Was it in the glorious reign ? " " It was, " said I, nodding assent. " Aye, then were times : is'nt it true ? " " True,

your Excellency," said we unanimously. "But where do you serve?" "I only wish at present to enter the service." "What is it now-a-days!" exclaimed Antippus Yermoláyeveetch. "The government-offices are now filled with such a set, that a decent man can hardly breathe amongst them." "Is'nt it true?" "True, your Excellency:" said Meloveeden, and I chanted after him the same response. "But even now there are situations of a peculiar nature," added Meloveeden. "Yes, there is something in that; but what is the merit of these peculiar duties! Is'nt it true?" said Antippus Yermoláyeveetch. "Are there the same grandees now, that there were then?—Is'nt it true? It used to be, if you call upon a grandee, he is stretched out in his *khalaat* on a *divan*; there he turns himself, and before him stands a string of Princes, Counts, and Generals, waiting the signal from him whether to laugh or cry. Is'nt it true? But now the grandee himself dares not sit when others are not seated; he receives even petitioners in uniform, and calls his inferior always *you*, or by his Christian name and patronymic. Is'nt it true? Now, what sort of times are these? can any good come of that? Is'nt it true? Formerly a grandee abused you worse than his own footman, and sometimes gave you a shove and threw the papers in your face; but where there was passion, kindness would follow. Is'nt it true? You cannot conceive to what a pitch the depravity of manners has come now. I was telling my nephew an anecdote how a grandee in my time rewarded his secretary on one occasion with a couple of hundred souls of peasants. A recommendation which

he had presented in his favour, was not attended to at head-quarters, and the grandee made his secretary a present of a couple of hundred souls of his own. What d'ye think was my nephew's opinion of this pretty action ? Why, he replied, that, ' if he had been in the secretary's place, he would not have accepted of the two hundred souls ; because,' says he, ' he was the emperor's servant and not the grandee's, and he had no right to receive a reward from anybody but the emperor.' You see what airs people put on now-a-days. But who d'ye think this secretary was?—my own self. Ah ! those were the times, nice little times ! Isn't it true ? People now are all for politeness, but what is the use of that ? It runs over the mustachios, but takes good care not to enter the month. When I served in an inferior rank, I sometimes wanted leave of absence. I gave in, one day, a petition to that effect, and waited upon my superior officer for a gracious answer, at a time when he was engaged with a number of visitors. Do you know what reception he gave me ? “ Thou fool, Antee Yermoláyeveetch, blockhead,” says he—“ I hear, your Excellency !” says I. He repeats—“ Thou fool, Antee Yermoláyeveetch, ass, blockhead.” “ I am to blame, your Excellency,” says I, with a low bow. “ Thou askest leave for two months.” “ Exactly so,” your Excellency. “ Why hast thou not asked thy salary for two months likewise,” added my commander. “ Thou art a fool, brother, but here is thy furlough, and here is also an order on the paymaster for thy salary.” I kissed my worthy commander's hand, and left the room with a bow, blessing my benefactor. But now they come in

with ‘*bon jour*,’ and they go out with ‘*bon jour*.’ Is’nt it true ? What do you think my nephew says about that ? Why, he says : ‘ Better give nothing, and treat your inferior like a man, but not like a horse.’ That is the way now-a-days. Is’nt it true ?” “ As we cannot get back the golden age,” said I, “ we must even put up with things as they are ; and I beg your Excellency will take me under your patronage.” “ We shall see about it, we shall see about it. People who were once clerks with me, now fill important situations. What is the good of that ? However we shall see about it. I shall see and talk about it. But now, you know, there is what they call a *style* in vogue. They require chancery-papers to be written in harmony like songs, and besides, to be short and clear and business-like. Is’nt it true ? Now all this is impossible. Is’nt it true ? What the deuce can a man make of those little slips of paper ? It was another affair when they could throw you off two or three thousand sheets about the stealing of a fowl or the breaking of a pane of glass, so that you would break your head sooner than come to a conclusion ! A pretty thing to wade through business in spite of yourself. Is’nt it true ?”

- - - - He was here interrupted by one of his footmen announcing the arrival of the police-overseer, who begged permission to wait upon him. “ Tell him to come in !” - - - - “ I am now-a-days out of place as an incapable man ! Do you understand me ? Nevertheless, nothing occurs but people of sense come to me for advice. Here the police has ordered my neighbour’s railing to be painted. So they

all come to me for advice what colour to put on. Anteep Yermoláyeveetch is an incapable man, forsooth ! Is'nt it true ?”

We made our bows and retired, receiving permission to come every day to dinner and in the evening. “Silly old creature !” said I to Meloveeden, when we got into the carriage : “he is like an alarm clock, which rings the hour where the index stops.” “The Lord have mercy upon you, if you say to any body in Moscow that Anteep Yermoláyeveetch is a silly creature. They will note you down for a *Raskólnik* * or freethinker. Be silent and listen. These old men have it in their power to do you a great deal of good and a great deal of harm.” “Very well : I think we have had enough of them to day.” “One more visit and we shall have done ; but this will be more to your taste. I shall take you to a dear cousin of mine, whom the whole of Moscow is in love with, and she deserves it too.”

“*Ah, mon cher Alexandre !*” “*Ah, ma cousine Annette !*” They embraced and kissed, and Meloveeden seating himself on a sofa beside the lady, they began to whisper to one another, and kept it up till it seemed that they had forgotten me. At last the lady recollected herself. “*Ah, pardon !*” “My dear Aneta,” said Meloveeden, “I recommend to your particular favour and patronage, my friend, benefactor, deliverer, and what not, Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejee-ghen, who, besides his outward recommendations

* One of the names of the Russian non-conformists.

which you see, is as wise and good as you or I, and has fifteen hundred souls." "*Charmée.*" "A truce to ceremony, if you please," returned Meloveeden. "Recollect that he is a second edition of myself. Observe; what I want is to get my friend placed in the service, and introduced into the best Moscow society. You have an extensive party of your own, cousin. Have the goodness to raise your voice in his favour for a week or so. You may confidently assure everybody, that he is just such a man as myself, and you was once persuaded, you know, that I was an angel of a man." "Thou art still the same weathercock as thou always wast," said she. "Where is your husband?" asked Meloveeden. "Quite taken up, travelling about on the affairs of his contracts and *zavóds* :* he is now in Petersburg. I ought to attend to his business here—and confess that is what I cannot bear." "Along with my friend, we shall endeavour to console the fair Ariadne," said Meloveeden, kissing cousin Aneta's hand. "But do not expect me to turn you into a heavenly constellation: no! yet you are too good for earth." "*Toujours volage et aimable,*" said she. "Meantime, good-bye, my dear," said Meloveeden. "We have been so wearied out with two heavy visits which we paid amongst your Moscow centres of gravity, that we must hurry home. *A revoir!*" She also invited us to dine every day and spend the evening.

* *Zavod* has no corresponding term in English, except perhaps the word *works*, used in its technical signification to denote indiscriminately manufactories, founderies, distilleries, &c.

CHAPTER V.

Chart of the great world—Meeting with a dear enemy—Oh human weakness !

“ WHAT would you say, my readers, if you were shewn four men and four women, who left their homes every evening, merely for the purpose of satisfying their hunger and quenching their thirst together, of talking about the proceedings of mice and the rise and progress of smoke, playing at shuttlecock, and then from pure *ennui* hopping upon one leg, drumming with their fingers, and making grimaces behind one another’s backs ? Would you not say they were idiots ? You must not judge so harshly, but observe the occupations of the people who form what is called the great world. Listen to what they say ; look at what they do ! make a faithful abstract of all their words and actions, and you will be convinced that this abstract exactly tallies with that of the occupations of the four pairs here mentioned, whom you were upon the point of calling idiots !

“ The first duty of the world to which I allude, is *visiting* : now what does visiting denote ? Tell me ; is it not passing strange, to drive, run, hurry, pop in for one minute into one place, say nothing, or speak some empty silliness ; after that, make your bow and hurry away to a second place, and a third, and so on ?

The time is lost, the head is unimproved, the heart is vacant, the body is fatigued, and the pocket is eased of a part of its burden which might have relieved the wants of a poor family. In the meantime visits are an all-important occupation, and a man of the world knows no other duty, no other business of a morning, than to dedicate in the first place some hours to his nails, teeth, and hair, (and the signing of bills,) then to drive from one end of the town to the other—a-visiting.

“Another important occupation is *dining*. It is true, this is an indispensable affair, in a literal sense, for the purpose of self-preservation. But in the great world, a principal object of thought is how and where they shall eat. Their greatest happiness consists in eating at that table, where turkeys, fowls, and partridges, are to be fed upon by people of weight—that is to say, people who not only can have at their own table plenty of turkeys, fowls and partridges, but are so situated, that they can also procure for another man the happiness of having plenty of turkeys, fowls and partridges. Revolve it in your mind as you please, but this is the real *rationale* of dining. What are the chief ends of a man of the world? Places, ranks, and pensions? To what do all these tend? That a man, by help of these, may become of more note, that is to say, live better. But what does to live better mean? To have a larger house and a longer table. This again resolves itself into a command of plenty of turkeys, fowls, &c. You may talk of Camilluses, Cincinnatuses, and Fabriciuses. Ancient his-

tory, ancient nonsense ! Such gentlemen now-a-days would pass for idiots. ‘ Other times, other manners ;’ and if any of our modern commanders-in-chief should betake himself to the plough like Cincinnatus, or, like Belisarius, should go a-begging, the district-police would take them both into custody, (not without reason,) for breaking in upon established order, and for vagrancy. Our age is essentially a *dining* age, though it is rather amusing to see people make a pompous scene of the simplest and most animal necessity of nature, and assemble in parade to the sound of music amidst the glare of gold and silver, and all this,—to fill their bellies ! To invite a person to participate in this luxurious operation means to do him *an honour*. Think as you please, but the wolves go to work in a more rational manner. They assemble together when there is prey in view, or the noble wolfish breed is to be continued, but eat together only when the prey has been got by their joint endeavours. It appears to me that it would be a much better fashion to invite guests not to eat but to sleep together. Sleep is also one of the most indispensable of human wants ; consequently, it is in every respect as rational an enjoyment. Sleep is also the nobler of the two ; for it is said that a man can exist nine days without eating, but more than three days he has not strength to resist sleep. The advantages also which such a fashion would have, are incalculable. In the first place, it would be cheaper ; in the second, less nonsense would be talked ; in the third, the constitutions of the guests would suffer less ; and lastly, the landlord or his tradesmen would

not be so soon ruined in doing an honour to a necessary man.

“ After dinner there is another important affair—*cards*. Imagine to yourselves beings, created after the image of God, sitting at little tables covered with green cloth, holding in their hands little slips of glazed paper on which are engraved grotesque figures at variance with all the rules of art, and finding their pleasure in contesting who shall have for his share the most spots, or guessing what sort of a slip of paper will fall on such a side. The guessers, or gainers, or simply—rogues, who know how to take advantage of this amusement, become the possessors of money which is either wrung from the peasant who earns the copeck in the sweat of his face, or acquired by the sale of conscience, by inheritance, by dowry, or it may be, the property of another.

“ At last the evening comes on—another important affair ! This is the time for skipping according to rule, by sound of music. It is true, sheep follow the same fashion, but they only skip when they are satisfied. People in the world, on the other hand, jump like baboons in chains, sometimes with tears in their eyes. This performance is a duty. The landlord wishes to have it said next day, that there was a ball at his house. Such of the guests, then, as are not disabled by the gout, or from over-eating themselves, and whose limbs are not stiff by decrepitude, must skip, and purchase by this performance the privilege of being asked to other houses.

“ The last important business is—*supper*; succeeded

by a few hours' sleep, to awake with an aching head, white tongue, and exhaustion over all the members. Next day the same thing is repeated, and the day after the same, and so on till youth and life run their course : the exhausted body then breaks up : the soul departs and leaves behind it no trace of its existence : the name continues some time in the notary's books and tradesmen's accounts, and is at last consigned to oblivion ; while a thousand beings, alike in their leading features, run the same course of insignificance, and are cut off the face of the earth like so many oysters. I may ask, is not a high-bred, two-legged animal, of less merit than a merino sheep, which, during its earthly existence, clothes and enriches many people with its wool, harms no one with its tongue, foment no intrigues to attain a situation which it is incapable of filling, deprives no one of honour or property, and exalts not its head above its fellows, on account of its fleece being finer than theirs ?

“ In the great world you will find not only grown-up people, but even children, who speak in many tongues. All the difference consists in some speaking with greater fluency than others. But what do they speak about ? I am really ashamed to repeat it. In a family-circle, among persons of both sexes united by mutual advantage, (which is called friendship) in the fulness of their hearts, the favourite occupation is backbiting, which blossoms in the world under the name of frankness and acuteness of observation. Attend to the conversations in small circles—this is their essence : such a one does not know how to dress ;

another is a coquette ; another has a bad temper ; another is a fool ; another is a spend-thrift ; another a manœuvrer : this one is unsufferable ; that one is ridiculous ; this one is an awkward creature ; that one is simply an idiot ; this one is quite taken up with himself or herself ; that one is favoured beyond his or her deserts ; and this one is in disgrace, not without cause. In one place it was very dull, in another very pleasant, notwithstanding the landlord or landlady was unbearable. To-morrow we expect that it will be an agreeable party in such a place, but it will be tiresome in such another place ; but, to make up for that, such and such persons of note will be there. In the more splendid parties, what do they talk about ? It is colder to day than it was yesterday. This one has got a situation, that one an order ; this one has lost his place, that one has come to town, and this one is leaving town. In the *magasins de modes* we saw such and such new articles : this dress-maker does her work well, and that peruke-maker understands his business. This lady of note is unwell ; that young lady is going to be married ; this one has been appointed a maid of honour ; that one has been brought to bed of a son ; this one has lost his daughter, &c. &c. &c.

“ My God ! is it for this that man is endued with the gift of speech ? is it for this that he is distinguished from all other creatures by an immortal soul, by a contemplative and creative mind, to waste his breath in unmeaning sounds, like crows and magpies ? Thought and feeling can no more find nourishment in the society of the great world than larks and nightin-

gales can subsist in a barren, sandy wilderness. The carrion-crow is attracted thither by a lifeless carcase : it is his food. The nightingale delights to live among shrubbery, and the lark to hang upon the air !

“ To be, from childhood to decrepitude, a life-long slave to what are called the usages of the world ; to be a machine for executing bows, and movements of the jaw-bones ; to speak without thought, and think without speaking ; to listen to nonsense, and answer without sense ; to be in continual motion without leaving the circle of unmeaningness—and all this is called life ! Ah, my good Arsalan Sultan, thou art right, perfectly right ! All hail Kirgheezyan steppe ! *There*, at least, *there* is some end ; *here*, there is none.”

This is what I wrote in my memorandum-book after two years' experience of the great world. If I chose to describe these years, I might write fifty volumes of nonsense, as like one another as two *elegantes*, a Parisian and a Russian. But so much has been already written upon these topics, that it would be as superfluous as wearisome to enter upon what is nothing else than a continuation of the history of monotony. During these two years, in place of increasing my stock of wisdom, I with difficulty avoided the total loss of what little I previously had. Following literally the instructions of Meloveeden, I procured myself a situation by patronage, received three ranks, although up to this time I do not know where the office stands in which I nominally served, or what was its name : I only recollect that it was something about

public buildings. During these two years I succeeded in making myself a confidant of the old women, a favourite of the old men, acquired many friends among the young people, particularly the young ladies, many of whom found me amiable, kind, worthy, and attentive. But my soul was formed for activity—for strong emotions ; while high life in place of being a career of activity is nothing but a restless sleep.

My mother persevered in her serious, devotional, turn of mind. Meloveeden, having received from some conscientious man ten thousand roubles which he had gained from him at play, and for which he had received his bill when he lived with his wife in Moscow, set out in search of his dear Petronella, learning that she had taken up her abode in seclusion somewhere in Poland. I remained alone in Moscow, and was tormented with ennui. My heart thirsted for something : I sought for gratification, but did not find it. Many ladies smiled upon me : many girls selected me in a *cotillon*, and in the *petits jeux* gave me unequivocal marks of preference. But I did not chuse to be either the slave of female desires ripened before their time, or to make a fraudulent marriage. The handsome Vejeeghen might please the women without being either a nobleman, or the proprietor of fifteen hundred souls ; but before marrying into a good family, he would have had to come to a more particular explanation. I was so considerate, that I did not think either of love or marriage : but this considerateness proceeded from the callousness of the heart, not of the imagination. To spring the mine of the

passions within my breast, nothing was wanting but a spark. Through the icy surface of the great world the cold vapours of calculation are all that penetrate. Some in their simplicity mistake for flame the reflection of the rays from this sheet of ice. Appearances are deceitful ! deceitful ! You will find there no heat, nothing but glare.

Living in the never-ceasing, dissipating confusion of the great world, I still felt the want of diversion ! But among us, a man of the world has no intermediate state between ennui and debauchery. The arts and sciences are barely suffered to sprout : it is a rare chance if they blossom, and they never bear fruit fit to feed a mind slumbering in inactivity. There is, however, one rational amusement in society—the *theatre* : of this I was an ardent admirer ; for, having no time to read to myself, I gladly availed myself of the reading of others. I thus pleased my own taste, besides conforming to the usages of society.

One day I saw an advertisement in the newspaper, that a newly arrived provincial actress would make her *debut* upon the Moscow boards in the character of a coquette. Meloveeden's cousin, my sincere friend, begged me to take a box. "I am so tired," said she, "looking always on our automatons, that I want to see what like a creature a coquette really is." I would have said, that she had only to cast her eyes towards the mirror, but restrained myself, and went to procure a ticket. We drove to the theatre. The curtain rose. The new actress had not yet appeared : cousin Aneta and I exerted our ingenuity at the expence of the un-

fortunate performers, who, as the phrase is, were like to leap out of their skins in their endeavours to please us. On a sudden the new actress appears ; the pit receives her with plaudits ; she curtsies, she bows, approaches towards the orchestra, begins to speak, but I see and hear nothing. "What has happened to you ?" said cousin Aneta, who wished to make some remark upon the dress of the new actress. "For God's sake, what has happened to you ? You are pale, you tremble, you are unwell." "Unwell, very unwell !" said I in a low tone of voice, and left the box. In the new actress I recognized — Groonya. Was I in love with Groonya ? I do not know. I was very young when I fell acquainted with her, and my mind was then incapable of powerful emotions. My passions could only drop, but could not run into my heart. The beauty of Groonya made then a powerful impression upon my imagination, but not upon my heart. Before and after my unfortunate journey to Orenburg, I met with many females prettier than Groonya, but, as soon as I arrived at that age in which the passions come to maturity, without regarding Groonya's deceit, or the evils which I had experienced from her duplicity, I persuaded myself that it would be difficult to find a woman more amiable than Groonya. Her look and the sound of her voice never failed to excite in my mind a sensation which it is impossible to describe in words. I think I could have recognised her amongst a million, though I had been blindfolded, her voice had such a charm in it. It went right to my heart, while her looks had a supernatural

strength to draw and keep my eyes within the sphere of her attraction. Since the time of our last meeting I had endeavoured not to think of Groonya, but she involuntarily recurred to my memory when love spread its nets for me in the great world. There I saw many beauties, but not one pleased me. Ah ! why was not Groonya as perfect in the structure of her mind as in that of her body, I often thought, and again endeavoured not to think more about her. And after all, here she is again before my eyes.

After taking breath in the lobby, I went out into the street, and in the neighbourhood of the theatre, collected my scattered thoughts. I could not explain to myself the reason why the sight of Groonya had produced such an effect upon me. It might have naturally enough been ascribed to sudden fright, or to the dreadful remembrance of that occurrence which had well nigh proved fatal to me. But it was neither the one nor the other. Groonya appeared to my imagination in no frightful colours, but in all the splendour of her enchanting beauty. What a fine woman, thought I ; how she has improved as she has grown up ! But I will never see her again, I must never see her. Absorbed in these reflections, I found myself again in the corridore of the theatre, and almost without perceiving what I was about, entered the box. Since I am here, thought I, (excusing my weakness) I may allow myself to see her in public ; and I am surely not to debar myself from the pleasure of the theatre for that light-headed girl.

“ Are you better ? ” asked cousin Aneta. - - -

“ A little.” - - - - “ Ah, how nicely the new actress performs her part !” added she : “ what an address, what a noble voice ; she seems quite *au fait* ! She sings also very agreeably, and has a pretty tolerable person. In truth she is a fortunate acquisition for our theatre, and you may depend upon it, this good-looking Mademoiselle Preemankeen will turn the heads of our Moscow youth.” I kept silence and looked at the play-bill to read the name which Groonya had assumed. The first two acts being over, I saw Groonya in the third. She played admirably, and outstripped all the expectations of the amateurs of the drama. There was no end to the plaudits, and at the end of the performance the audience called for her. During the continuance of Groonya’s acting I was all on fire. I followed in my mind her every word, her every movement ; suffered for her, trembled for her, and almost wept for joy when the loud plaudits resounded through the house. I think I would have died on the spot, if Groonya had not been successful !

After conducting my lady to her carriage, I declined the pleasure of accompanying her home and of spending the evening with her. My limbs moved towards the actors’ entrance. I intended, wrapped up in my cloak, to have a nearer glimpse of Groonya. Groonya comes out, but I forgot to conceal myself. “ Vejeeghen !” exclaimed she : “ Groonya !” said I —— and could add no more. She looked at me steadily, then boldly took me by the arm and carried me with her. Her carriage drew up ; she seated herself, and ordered me to sit beside her. I was overcome. The carriage rumbled along the

pavement, and I kept silence, not daring to lift an eye, and fearing explanations which were likely to mortify Groonya. She proceeded herself to draw me out of this disagreeable dilemma. “ Vanya, my dear friend, my Vanya ! Thou hast great reason to abhor me. I am to blame, but not so much as thou thinkest. I was too young and inexperienced : I was not my own mistress, but was obliged to submit to my mother. Thou knowest it all, and my heart tells me that thou forgivest me, that thou wilt love me as before ; love *me* as I love *thee*. Tell me, Vanya, did I play well to-day ? ” I kissed Groonya’s hand, heaved a deep sigh, and said : “ Thou didst admirably, incomparably ! but I do not wonder at it ; nature created thee for an actress. Thy playing led me to the brink of destruction, and now thou wishest to take away my peace and happiness. Groonya, thou art too seducing ; I fear thee ! Allow me to leave the carriage and bid thee adieu for ever ! ” These last words I pronounced with such a sorrowful air, that even Groonya was touched. I almost choked myself in my endeavours to restrain my tears ; my heart was like to burst ; my features moved convulsively. “ Thou fearest me, Vanya ; thou wishest to run away from me ; and thou findest me seducing ? Vanya, thy words wound me deeply, but still I find myself supremely blest. Believe me, my friend, that I love thee and never ceased to love thee. All the time of our separation, thou wast never out of my heart and mind. If I was to blame for my conduct towards thee, I have atoned for my fault by sincere repentance and pitiable suffering.

Vanya ! love me —— or I shall die of despair.” At these words Groonya wept.

I was in extacy, and do not recollect what answer I made : nor can I describe my feelings, for I was in the third heaven ! When the carriage stopped at her door, our hearts were more strongly knit together than before the journey to Orenburg. With light feet we tripped up the stairs, arm-in-arm, and hand-in-hand, entered the room, embraced and kissed like old friends who had never quarrelled. The table was covered. Groonya ordered another *corer* and the best wine to be set down, and taking me by the arm, led me with a candle through all her apartments. “ Look, my friend, at my little establishment. Don’t it seem as if it wanted a master ? This is my drawing-room. It is not large, but I do not intend to have many guests. This is my dressing-room.—This is my dining-room. Here is my cabinet or study.—Here is my bed-room. Isn’t it true that my bed-room is fitted up nicely ?” “ All thy rooms, my dear Groonya, are fitted up tastefully and very decently, though not luxuriously : by this I should conclude that thou hast a tolerable salary.” “ What sort of salaries do they give, my friend !” replied Groonya : “ all my hope rests on my benefit. I brought along with me a couple of thousand roubles, which I have almost entirely spent on indispensable wants, and am owing, besides, three thousand roubles for furniture. God is gracious, and I rely upon his providence ; one way or other, I hope to be able to get through, but thou wilt agree, my friend, that a young woman, an actress, with my small abilities and a pretty

tolerable exterior, should not live like a rope-dancer ? However, it is supper-time."

After supping with Groonya, I remained till long past midnight, and still had not time to ask her what had induced her to become an actress. Ten times she began to relate her adventures, and ten times I interrupted her, to talk of love ! Upon this occasion, all that I learned was, that she had lost her mother and property. She invited me to dine with her next day, and promised to relate her history. It was time to separate. I went home mad with love, continually repeating to myself—"Groonya, dear Groonya, she loves me ; there is no doubt that she was innocent in deceiving me." Next morning, it struck me that it must be unpleasant for Groonya to be straitened for want of money, and to be in debt. I therefore sent her, by my man Petroff, five thousand roubles.

Notwithstanding that I lived decently, kept my carriage, and dressed always in the newest fashion, entertained my friends, made small presents to the ladies on their name's-days, and bought confections and toys for all spoiled children in order to please their mammas ; bought lottery tickets which never turned out prizes, and paid my card-debts to the old women without ever receiving a kopeek of what they owed me ; notwithstanding all these expences, I did not break upon my capital. This will appear to many astonishing, particularly when I add that I used no extraordinary means to acquire money. But, when luck favours a man, money will come into his pocket almost unawares ; when, on the other hand, it begins to turn

against him, neither strong-boxes nor bolts can hinder his money from taking wings and flying away. I played games of skill honestly, but dexterously, coolly and attentively : I sat down and played for high stakes, and was almost invariably a gainer. Having no conception of dishonest play, by mere dint of luck I thwarted all the plans laid against me by professional gamblers. When faro was the game, I suddenly put some cards into the heart of a *taille* ; if I gained, I pocketed the money and marched home ; if I lost, I gave up playing, and never continued till my money was all gone. I proceeded in this way by the advice of Meloveeden, who well knew how to advise, though he was ill able to carry his wise rules into execution—for this reason, because he advised in cold blood, while in action his blood was always heated by his passions. Not being attached either to gaming or money, I played, as it is called, by calculation ; and, fortune favouring me, without being a gambler, I lived by play. In the course of two years, I had gained about twenty five thousand roubles ready money, and had, at least, as much owing me. But, as I sent Groonya all that remained on hand, leaving myself only some hundreds for my petty expences, I would now have to break in upon my capital in case of any unforeseen expences. It is true this was greatly against my will ; but when I sent the money to Groonya, I thought of Groonya and not of my money. She made a present of a hundred roubles to Petroff, who, when he returned, was quite in raptures with the *good beauty*, as he called Groonya on first ac-

quaintance. She thanked me in such a tender letter, that, when I read it, I could have given her my last kopeek. If any one tells me that he has thought of money and been in love at the same time, I will answer him, in plain terms,—*that* was no love; it was calculation.

CHAPTER VI.

History of Groonya—Intimacy with a clever Actress, or the shortest, surest, and pleasantest road to ruin.

I did not fail to come to dinner. Groonya received me with open arms, laughed, wept, and repeated a thousand times that there was not a happier being in the world than she, now that she was re-established in my affections. During dinner, I related to her in a few words my adventures in the Kirgheezyan *steppe*. After dinner we sat down on a divan, and Groonya began her narrative.

“ My father, as you know, left behind him considerable property ; but my mother, to whose management it was intrusted during my nonage, squandered it, besides contracting large debts. You saw our manner of life. At our house assembled all the amateurs and professors of card-playing. All that my mother gained for her share in her copartnery with the professional gamblers, she lost in trying her luck against them, besides losing money of her own. To complete her misfortunes, she fell in love with a young weathercock, who promised to marry her, borrowed from her a large sum of money, and married—another. Our condition, before setting off for Orenburg, was quite desperate : the house was mortgaged, not a kopeek of our capital remained, and we had twice as much debt

as the whole property amounted to. At that time my uncle died, and we hastened to Orenburg to claim what he had left, hoping that every thing would go in our favour.

“I hardly left the boarding-school, where I had learned the usual accomplishments, that is to say, to hold up my head and chatter French, when my mother proceeded to complete my education under her own care, and began to teach me coquetry, in order that, by my beauty and fascinating manners, I might draw rich young men to the house. You have frequently seen how I used to pick out cards for a hot-blooded *ponteur*, and advise him to stake large sums on my good fortune. I always made choice, for this purpose, of players who could not look with composure on my charms, and willingly submitted to me. I need hardly add, that the card chosen by me always lost, as the gamblers whispered into my ear what to fix upon. This was a disagreeable part to perform, but I was obliged to obey, and had, besides, to distribute kind looks and friendly smiles, and listen to all the amorous speeches of the players who were in love with me, and to flatter them with the hopes of reciprocal affection. I give you my word of honour, that I coquetted with the greatest aversion before I knew thee.

“I was ordered to allure thee to the house. This was an extremely agreeable commission. From the time that I left the boarding-school I had no occasion to dissemble, for I loved thee sincerely. Recollect how I not only did not draw thee to play, but even made a practice of withdrawing thee from it. My

mother often scolded me for that ; but I resolutely declared to her, that on the understanding that I was not to allure thee to play, I agreed to decoy others at her discretion. For this reason she left me at rest.

“ In Orenburg another misfortune befell us. The court had scarcely resolved to put us in possession of my uncle’s property, when other claimants appeared ; half a dozen of *elevés* with a will regularly drawn up and witnessed. The property had been acquired by my uncle himself, consequently it would have been at any rate a vain endeavour to attempt to set aside the will ; much more so in this case, where the *elevées* were good-looking girls, and had strong patronage. Baffled in this, my mother opened a gaming-house, wrote to Moscow for some adepts, and appointed me again to play the part of syren, and entice the ill-fated adventurers on the sea of fortune upon our Scylla and Charybdis.

“ Business went very badly with us till winter. We almost lived upon tick. Particularly at first, we were greatly in straits for money. At this time, there arrived in Orenburg, upon government-business, the adjutant of a Petersburg general, Captain Count Lovkoff, a young man of an agreeable person, of a wealthy family, cheerful disposition, and fascinating manners. He saw me on the promenade, fell in love with me, introduced himself at our house, and became a daily visitor. My mother, under threats of her curse, ordered me to use all my arts of allurement to make a prize of Count Lovkoff. The game of love is much more dangerous than any game at cards, and it often

happens, that the loss is upon the side of the party which spreads all its snares to entrap the other. Count Lovkoff lost money in our house, but, to recompense him for that, he asserted his rights over me, and insensibly caught me in the very same toils which I had prepared for him. Hearing patiently his declarations of love, and becoming so accustomed to them, that I felt uneasy when I did not hear them, at last, in order to continue this agreeable amusement, and keep the Count hanging about me, I acknowledged that I liked him. The Count was a man of the world, and experienced beyond his years in affairs of this stamp. We soon formed a close friendship and familiarity, of which you were a witness. - - - -

“ You still lived in my heart, but I confess your respectful, timid, love appeared but child’s play compared with the fiery, impetuous passion of the Count. When he learned from Vorovaateen, that you had arrived in Orenburg in search of me, he swore he would annihilate you ; and, in order to save you from danger, I thought it best to keep you at a distance, and even to abuse you.— — It is true, the medicine was rather nauseous, but I thought then that I did well. Your sudden appearance put me into such a state of agitation, that I was beside myself.— — I do not know what I said. Your attempt to lower me in the eyes of the Count put me into a rage. My dear Vanya, forgive me !”

Groonya wept, and I solemnly declared and assured her with an oath, that I entirely forgave her, and did not preserve in my breast the smallest particle of dis-

pleasure for any thing which had happened.—“Be sincere, Groonya,” said I: “all is forgotten, all is forgiven: I love thee more than ever!”

“I wished to learn what had become of thee,” said Groonya. “I was informed that thou hadst been taken ill; that Vorovaateen, the day following, had hired another lodging; that some unknown person had come for thee in a cart, to remove thee into thy new dwelling, but that the landlord of this other lodging had not seen thee. Vorovaateen in a few days left Orenburg, without taking leave of us, and I did not know what had become of thee. A secret voice within me reproached me for my behaviour towards thee. Shocking dreams frequently disturbed my sleep. I saw thee dying, saw thy spectre threatening me with vengeance. I thought that thou wert dead, I wept, I prayed: at last my spirits became gradually calmer, and if I did not forget thee altogether, at any rate I thought seldomer about thee.

“My dear friend! allow me to cast a veil over the more particular details of my adventures, mixed up as they are with transgressions, the enormity of which I feel in its fullest extent, and of which I repent from the bottom of my soul. The Count, having represented to me in an artful manner my unfortunate situation in a gaming-house, and promising to marry me after the death of his old and sickly father, persuaded me to elope with him secretly for Kieff, where his regiment was quartered, and whither he had been ordered, on having given up the designation of adjutant. It was not long before I saw my error. The Count

was amiable, tender, and respectful, like all lovers till such time as their designs are completed ; but after that, he behaved rudely, capriciously, and coldly, and seemed anxious to rid himself of his credulous victim. Not a day passed without quarrelling, mutual abuse, and tears. The contempt with which I was treated on all sides, stung me to the quick, and the fickleness of the Count who amused himself with other connections, drove me to desperation. At last he declared to me that his father was dead, and that he was obliged to set off immediately for Petersburg. I reminded him of his promise : he was silent. I asked him to take me with him : he affirmed it was impossible. At last he departed, and in a month I learned that his father was alive, and that my lover was married to a rich young lady of an illustrious family.

“ You may imagine to yourself my despair. I thought of returning to my mother who had removed back to Moscow ; but in answer to my letter, I received the news that my mother was dead. I remained an orphan, cast upon the wide world, without a protector, without money, and without my good name !

“ The Count appointed one of his friends to settle with me, and offered me an annuity, on condition of leaving him at peace. I spurned his offer, and wrote his wife a letter in which I exhausted my indignation upon the author of my misfortunes. I was for some time undecided, whether I should live or throw myself into the water. My youth at last got the better of my despair : I grew calmer, but not knowing in what way to get a livelihood, I thought of engaging

myself as a servant. At this time there chanced to be in Kieff a troop of strolling players, composed of half-taught schoolboys, expelled students, half-lettered actresses, and slaves who had got their liberty, or were allowed by their masters to live on passports. The thought suddenly struck me to turn actress. The manager of this horde, a decayed prompter, having examined my abilities for the theatre, was so pleased with me, that he immediately installed me in his troop as first singer, first tragic and comic actress, and first dancer. I declined performing in Kieff, where the officers knew me. We set off for the Malo-russian fairs, where I acquired renown, and drew crowds to the booths in which we performed. I was the main support of the company, and owing to that was looked up to by all, more than even the manager himself. Notwithstanding I had been put over their heads, the women themselves loved me, because I did not interfere in any of their affairs, conducted myself modestly, kept admirers at a distance, and even got the name of being hard-hearted. I had no rest from suitors: some of the small country-gentry offered me their hand, but I preferred a free life, and did not chuse to bury myself alive in the folds of any of these sheep-shearers. The clapping of hands became to me a necessary of life; I thought of nothing but fame!

“Want of money followed us like a guilty conscience, whithersoever we went. When we arrived in any town, we usually lived upon credit, till we succeeded in collecting money to pay our debts and defray our expences to another place. We clothed our-

selves from the proceeds of our benefits, and boarded and lodged at the expense of the common stock or the manager. The division of the profits was regularly preconcerted on our arrival at each fair, but at the winding up, it always appeared that there was nothing to divide. However, we lived, though not in wealth, at least in cheerfulness, not caring for the future, and consoling ourselves with the present.

“ On one occasion, as we passed through a small market-town, the manager announced to us that the exchequer was in such a state of exhaustion, that it was impossible to move further without a fresh supply. We made a halt at the tavern, fitted up a shed in the yard for a theatre, made chandeliers of cask-hoops, erected our own paper scenery, and beplastered all the corners of the streets with written advertisements. Some days elapsed, and we had not a single auditor. At this time there chanced to alight at the tavern a rich gentleman, who was on his way from Petersburg to his estate in the country. Perceiving by our advertisement that our company intended to perform Sumaroakoff's tragedy of ‘*Demetrius the Pretender*,’ and the opera of ‘*The Miller*,’ and only waited for an audience to shew off their splendid abilities, the traveling gentleman, for his own recreation, ordered a performance for himself, and at the expence of a fifty-rouble note, entered the theatre *solus* along with his poodle. Notwithstanding that the poodle interrupted our declamation, barking prodigiously as soon as our ‘*Demetrius the Pretender*’ fell into a rage ; notwithstanding that the candles, entrenched upon the hang-

ing hoops, partly went out, and partly fell upon the actors' heads ; notwithstanding that there was not a complete fiddle in the whole orchestra, we went through the performance with *eclât*, and the rich gentleman observed in me abilities which he was pleased to call great talents. From pure generosity he made me a present of two hundred roubles to pay my expences to the government-town, where an amateur of the drama entertained a theatrical company. I followed his advice, left my companions, and on my arrival at the government-town, made myself known to the proprietor of the theatre. After my *debut*, I was allowed a benefit on condition of performing a certain number of times for account of the theatre. My benefit was splendid, for the elections of provincial magistrates and the public hunt happened to be at that time. With the money which I had acquired, and letters of recommendation, I set off for Moscow, addressed myself to one of the actresses belonging to the theatre here, and thou, having seen me on my first appearance on the Moscow boards, canst form some idea to thyself of my small abilities and of the success which I am likely to attain in the career that lies before me in this metropolis."

" Dear Groonya," said I, " thou seest nothing but flowers in the path which thou hast chosen, and forget'st to take into account the chance of meeting with reverses. Listen to my advice : give up the theatre ; I will marry thee ; we will go and settle in some country-town, and I with my capital will either enter into trade, or employ myself in agriculture. Hearts which

are happy together want but little outward enjoyments!"

Groonya mused a little, then placing her hand upon my shoulder, and with a look full of tenderness, said : "Vejeeghen ! thy Arcadian castles would do for a Vaudeville, but would not answer for real life. Is it possible that, at the name of fame, thy heart can remain cold ? Is it possible that the splendid success of thy Groonya does not move thee ? Vanya, dear Vanya ! if thou only knewest the pleasures arising from public applause, from seeing one's name in print, from reading one's praises in the newspapers, whilst thou lovedst me, thou not only wouldst not wish to withdraw me from my profession, but wouldst be doubly happy in the enjoyment of my love and my good fortune ! No, Vejeeghen, I cannot pluck myself from the theatre at the very moment when it is resounding with my applauses, when it procures me both the means of existence and the highest pleasure, and reconciles me with the world, from which I may say, I deserted. Wait a little while, allow me to indulge in my present enjoyments, and then —— I am thine for ever."

I wished to dispute, to argue the matter, but Groonya begged me to make an end of my discourse. "Fame and love !" exclaimed she : "that is the watch-word of a good actress. Take things as they are, or I will be unhappy !"

It was my duty to submit, or rather it was not my duty, but I thought it better to submit —— and held my peace. A month passed : Groonya became an ob-

ject of adoration to all the lovers of the fair sex and of the drama, and an object of envy to all coquettes. She triumphed : I suffered and was silent. There was gradually formed in my house a small society of the patrons of dramaturgy, of humble and officious servants of actresses who follow in the wake of any one of their sisters who bears the bell, in order to catch a cast-off admirer or get their benefit tickets disposed of, and of some of the official people connected with the theatre, who are as indispensable for the success of an actress as the wooden stands are for the scenery. But Groonya behaved herself admirably. Towards the rich and noble dramatic amateurs she behaved with a respectful pride ; received them only on fixed days and at fixed hours, all together in the presence of other females, and did not allow the smallest freedom either in word or behaviour. The officers * of the theatre she knew how to treat in such a manner that they invariably anticipated her wishes. Groonya passed for a phoenix of wit and a nonpareil of virtue. In the higher circles nothing was talked of but the beautiful Russian actress, who spoke French admirably. This last circumstance put the hoary admirers of the fair sex beside themselves. “ A Russian actress speak French ?— *C'est charmant ! c'est charmant !*” replied the old gallants : “ what a pity that she is virtuous ! Virtue in an actress !—— an extravagance which ought not to be tolerated.” So the gallants reasoned, but Groonya smiled, and loved me alone.

* The theatre, as well as the church, is, in Russia, united to the state.

One day I found Groonya quite melancholy ; her eyes were red, her cheeks were pale—it seemed she had been crying. I was amazed. “ Dear Groonya, what has happened to thee ; tell me for God’s sake ? ”

“ Ah, Vejeeghen, what an unfortunate being I am ! They have given me the principal part to perform in the new opera, to gratify the malice of that foolish and faded creature Maskeen, who prides herself merely because she can do what she likes with the property of Count Jalkeen, and appears upon the stage in a blaze of gold and diamonds. She will perform the second part in that opera ; that was my doing in spite of all the intrigues of the Count’s party. I had, however, to put up with a monstrous silly declaration of love from an ass of an *employé* behind the scenes. - - -

- - - Don’t fear, Vanya ; I see thy eye swelling and thou art losing heart already : I only heard the declaration, and have now quite forgotten it. Be that as it may, the principal part falls to me ! Now what does that spiteful Maskeen think to do. She has to represent my rival, a rich old widow ; and so she has ordered a wonderfully rich dress embroidered with pure gold upon velvet, and intends to appear with a load of brilliants beside me, who will be in false gold and glass pearls ! ” Groonya wept. “ But there are ways and means to remedy that,” said I, stammering : “ do not cry, but let us consult about it coolly.”—

“ What is the use of consulting ? out of a hundred old debauchees I might easily find one who is agreeable and who would be ready to ruin himself for my sake. But for millions of money I could not bear to

have to do with lifeless bodies. Every woman has her own way of thinking ; but I could never on any account agree to say *looblyoo* (I love) to a man to whom *memento mori* would be more fitting. Young beauties are either bare as hawks, or so much occupied with themselves, that they imagine their looks are prettier and more valuable than diamonds. What conscience there, Vanya ? I love thee alone, and would prefer to sink and burn for shame rather than be false to thee." I kissed Groonya's hand and said : "My dear Groonya! thy playing will eclipse the splendour of Maskeen's dress." "How can I play well when I have that doll with all her vain-show before my eyes !" "What would a dress cost ?" "Fifteen hundred." "Fifteen hundred is not much, but the brilliants." "The brilliants could be borrowed, only a deposit would have to be made for them. For my own use I only want a pair of decent diamond ear-rings and a pearl-clasp : all the rest might be borrowed. But let us drop the subject ; sit down beside me, Vanya, and we will talk about something else." "Excuse me, Groonya, but I cannot remain longer at present. I have but one request to make : do not torment thyself, and undertake nothing till dinner time. I will come and dine with thee, and we will again lay our heads together. Who knows but perhaps even Vejeeghen may be able to do something for thee !"

In a state of strong agitation I left Groonya. She loves me, thought I—she disdains all other connections from love to me, and for my sake even sacrifices female vanity and self love. O my invaluable Groonya ! I

ought to recompense thee for this disinterested affection, and return to thee a part of the pleasure which I enjoy from thy love. With these thoughts, I flew home, took my bank-receipts, went with them to the *opekoonsky soryet*, took up ten thousand roubles, and set off immediately to a jeweller. I selected a beautiful pair of ear-rings and pearl *fermoir*, for six thousand roubles, borrowed a diadem, necklace, and bracelets, valued at twenty-five thousand roubles, leaving in pledge my remaining bank-receipts, and returned to Groonya, who was just sitting down to dinner, supposing that I would not come. She received me tenderly but with a melancholy countenance. "Thou knowest, Groonya, that I have a superstitious fear of dreams?" "What of that?" "I dreamed last night that during dinner something unexpected occurred to thee: put my mind at ease, my dear, by seeing if all is right in the kitchen. Dost thou know that in a house lately, the cook, in place of sugar, sprinkled a tart with arsenic which had been placed in a cupboard for killing rats!" "My God, what strange thoughts arise in thy noddle!" said Groonya, and went out of the room, whilst I in the meantime opened my budget and placed on a small table the jewellery, along with a couple of thousand roubles for a dress. As soon as she came back into the room, I waited her at the door, and, taking her by the hand, led her up to the table, saying: "Begone dull care; I pray thee begone from Groonya." She looked at the things, then cast such a glance at me as almost melted me on the spot; threw herself into my arms, screamed out and fainted.

I carried her to the sofa, and called to the maid-servant, ran, bustled about, sprinkled her with water and perfumes, and at last succeeded in bringing her to herself. "Vanya," said she, "I know not how to thank thee; this heart which belongs to thee, feels, but my tongue is too weak to express."

Groonya, in the spring-tide of spirits which followed her past depression, was in such glee that I feared she would lose her senses. She screamed, laughed, sung, and was continually trying on, at one time the diadem, at another time the necklace, and at another time the bracelets. I obliged her to sit down at the table, but she every minute rose from her chair in order to look into the mirror and adjust her ornaments according to her fancy. "Groonya," said I, "thou that art so wise! surely these splendid toys cannot be of such value in thy eyes as to absorb all thy thoughts?" "No, my friend," replied she: "it is not the things which I care for, but the triumph over my haughty rival—a triumph which she does not anticipate—and which will be more valued by me, as the obligation comes from thee!"

In the mean time, the day of the performance approached, and Groonya made known to me, that the friends of Count Jalkeen were hatching a conspiracy against her. "Dear Vanya," said Groonya to me, "the world does not know of our close intimacy, and so it is also necessary for thee to form a party in my favour. I could easily do that myself, but I do not wish to excite thy jealousy or wound thy sensibility. Take some dozens of tickets, tell thy friends that thou

hast gained them in a wager, and distribute them gratis. Give a dinner or *dejeuner* to some of the most hot-headed, noisy, and daring bullies, and instruct them to support the right cause, encourage me by their plaudits, and call me to come forward, while on the other hand they hiss Maskeen." I attempted to object, but Groonya closed my mouth with her fair hand, kissed me, and demolished with a smile the whole of my philosophic battery. I was obliged, that is to say, I was inclined to submit.

At last the day of the performance came on. On that day, I gave a dinner in a tavern near the theatre, to a party of friends—bullies that is to say ; and when they were all half-seas-over, proposed to them to go to the theatre, to support the right side, distributing at the same time the tickets. We entered the theatre all in a body, and my friends only waited for my signal to hiss or clap their hands. In the mean time Groonya remained in her dressing-room till it should be her turn to come upon the stage. When she made her appearance, Maskeen was quite confounded at the sight of the brilliants and of the rich dress which Groonya wore ; and the whole behind-the-scenes faculty joined in pronouncing that it was impossible to be better or richer-dressed than Groonya. She was beside herself with joy, and this disposition of mind had such a powerful effect upon her acting, that she really surpassed all expectations ; while Maskeen in despair at her rival's triumph, forgot her part, and bungled the performance. The friends of Count Jalkeen did what they could to support his mistress, but the hisses of

our party drowned their feeble plaudits, and Groonya, loaded with applause during the continuance of the piece, was called upon the stage after its conclusion, while Maskeen, covered with shame and ridicule, abused Groonya behind the scenes, and on her return home, quarrelled with the Count.

I was received by Groonya with open arms. She had a party of guests to supper, but I was so distracted with the various emotions of that day, that I felt myself unwell and went home.

In proportion to Groonya's success in her dramatic career, and in proportion to the extent of her fame, it behoved her to dress better than, or at least as well as, other actresses, to have more suitable apartments, and to keep her own carriage. I would on no consideration agree that Groonya should have recourse to others to supply her wants, and accordingly did the needful. She had no shawls, but never asked me for any: when I asked her to take an airing with me, or to put on her brilliants of an evening, she would refuse with a smile, because she had no shawl, and without that, it would be quite foolish to go an airing or wear rich dresses. As a matter of course I had to buy a few shawls—what I had brought with me from the *steppe* having been sold.

At length, three new performances, two changes of lodgings, the completing of her wardrobe and winter-clothing, the setting up of her carriage, one celebration of her name's-day, and one of her birth-day, in the course of the year, eased me of forty thousand roubles, and brought me ten thousand roubles into

debt. I repeat that she never asked me for anything, and I had not the smallest inclination to purchase with money either the love or the good graces of any one. Neither I nor Groonya had any idea, when it happened, that such a deal of money had been spent. She wished to possess certain objects, and my money was the natural and obvious means to be used for putting these objects into her possession. It was left out of the calculation, that the one had to be parted with before the other could be procured ! Here I remained without a kopeek in the world, without any means of procuring more money, and obliged to maintain my poor mother. - - - - Reflecting upon my situation made me desperate, but I had not the spirit to tell Groonya of my misfortune. I even thought of shooting myself, thought of running to the Kirgheezian *steppe*, but my mother's condition restrained me. For some days I did not dare to appear before Groonya, and sat shut up in my room, thinking how I might decently keep my head above water. I told my mother that I was unwell. I could contrive nothing, and only fifty roubles remained in my purse. I had already written to Arsalan Sultan by way of Orenburg, but had received no answer. I now again wrote to Arsalan and the Kirgheezian elders, informing them of my place of residence, and begging them to send me the remainder of the money which fell to my share from the sale of the booty. The silence of my friends of the *steppe* was no good omen. In the meantime I feared lest my friends, patronesses, and creditors should hear of my ruin. A thousand projects were

born and died within my head, when on a sudden, on the evening of the sixth day, my room-door opened with a bounce, and in came—Groonya.

CHAPTER VII.

Deliver us from evil.—A lesson of systematic robbery.—The advice of an old soldier.—Again flush of cash.

“WHAT does this mean, my dear friend, that thou hast forsaken me?” said Groonya. “Is it such a mighty matter that thou hast squandered thy money?” “How! dost thou know it already?” “Why should not I know it, when thy own Petroff told me of thy grief.” “The rascal!” exclaimed I.— “Don’t get into a passion: he is thy sincere friend. Having seen that thou hadst lost thy cheerfulness and given up all thy usual habits, he guessed that thy purse was in a galloping consumption. At last when he perceived thee beginning to examine and handle thy pistols, the worthy Petroff could contain himself no longer, but ran to me to request me to come to thy *rescue*. Why art thou silent?” I scowled on Groonya in confusion and shame, and observed in her countenance, cheerfulness and smiles. “Cease thy sulking,” said Groonya: “Isn’t it a shame for a Kirgheezyan cavalier to take to heart the loss of his booty, when he is safe and sound in his own person? Hast thou not called me, many a time and oft, thy treasure and happiness. Here am I before thee, and yet thou repinest at the loss of thy money!” Groonya seated herself on the sofa, ordered me to sit beside her, and said: “How

much may it be that we have spent this year?" "More than fifty thousand!" Groonya burst into a laugh—"Excellent; capital!" exclaimed she: "but still it strikes me that we have been very economical! Judge now for thyself, if it is worth the while to repine for the loss of money? It is real dust which is carried about and blown away by the wind." "Consoling philosophy!" said I: "but without money it is impossible to exist; and love however tender, and friendship however disinterested, can fill only the heart."— — Groonya interrupted my words—"Ah! how wise thou art grown without money!" said she: "but leave these meditations, my dear Vejeeghen; there is nothing more wearisome in the world than the reasonings of a pennyless philosophy! Tell me now how much thou hast remaining?" "Less than nothing." "How so?" "That is to say, debts and inability to pay them." "I understand thee! But listen to me, Vejeeghen: I am come expressly to draw thee out of this unfortunate scrape. Be firm and fearless. An old acquaintance of my mother's, Yakoff Prokófýaveetch Zaráyzeen begs permission of me to keep a faro-bank in my house." - - - - "Groonya! thou art again for having recourse to dishonest shifts which have already been the ruin of thy family!" "Since the day that I was born, I never handled a card, nor do I mean ever to do so; consequently I can lose nothing. Zaráyzeen will give me an equal share of his gains without any risk on my part, merely for permission to play in my house." "That is to say, to make sure work, to steal, to commit downright

robbery !” “ But what have we to do with that, my dear friend ?” said Groonya coolly : “ Every one is gifted with will and reason : he who does not know how to regulate the one and use the other, ought to be sent to school, and of course pay for his lessons.” “ My pennyless philosophy is, I confess, more wearisome than thine : but thine, on the other hand, is as good as a licence to travel at full speed to Siberia.” “ What gibberish thou speakest : observe what it is that people live upon who constitute a large proportion of the great world, and are received and respected in society. One has enriched himself by bribes, another by spoliation of the public purse, another by being a trustee or guardian, another by robbing under the mask of law. ‘ Nobody’s a thief till he’s caught,’ the proverb runs ; and rich rogues make it a theme of self-commendation, that they have acquired their fortunes by their talents. Look around thee, and thou wilt see that one half of the town cheats and preys upon the other. The difference is only in the games which they play : some at politics, some at trade, some at government, some at law, some at faro, and some at whist.” “ Groonya, dear Groonya,” said I, kissing her hand ; “ thou art a very demon in the shape of an angel : I cannot dispute with thee, but do not oblige me to be dishonest, by taking advantage of my weakness ! I love thee so that I can refuse thee nothing. I can only pray : ‘ lead me not into temptation !’”— “ I do not propose to thee to engage in play thyself,” said Groonya : “ thou wilt be only my deputy with Zaráyzeen, to watch his motions lest he

should defraud me, and to see that he act properly, that is to say, that he do not commit himself, but use his skill with moderation. For that purpose, thou must thyself become acquainted with all the tricks of gambling." "I do not know one of them. I have heard of some of them, but know not as to how they are put into practice." "Zaráyzeen wants a *croupier** and *moitiant*,† who has not got into notoriety, and has what is called an imposing appearance. For that purpose he could not find a better man in the world than thee. Thou art modest in thy behaviour, easy in thy manners, of an agreeable exterior, kind"— — Groonya at these words, smiled, patted me on the head, and kissed me. I quite forgot myself.

After talking for some time on other subjects, Groonya left me Zaráyzeen's address, and told me to call upon him next day at ten o'clock in the morning, saying that he was already informed of my coming, and would expect me. She left me, wishing me more cheerfulness, firmness of spirit and—philosophy!

For the thousandth time since I had linked myself with Groonya, I exclaimed: 'Oh human weakness!' for the thousandth time I repeated the prayer: 'lead us not into temptation;' and remained just as I was before.

My mother observed that a great change had taken place in me, that I had grown grave, gloomy, and fretful. In the companies of the great world, which

* The *croupier* sits beside the banker, marks the winnings, and settles with the *ponteurs*.

† The person who has the half of the game.

I still continued to frequent, I was as amiable as ever : but a man in society, and a man at home, are two quite different persons. The domestic tyrant, the tormentor of his servants and family, frequently passes in the world for the most amiable of men : he who makes others split with laughter by the exuberance of his gaiety, frequently comes from, and goes back to, a house of weeping. To learn a man's character aright, you must observe him, first in his conduct as a citizen, and secondly in his conduct at home. A bad father to good children—a bad husband to a good wife—a bad son to good parents, can never be good members of society : such people do not deserve to be trusted with power over a dog, much less over their fellow-creatures.

I told my mother that unforeseen losses had eaten up my property, and that I would now have to work for a livelihood. My mother did not reproach me, nor shew any symptoms of anger. She begged me to allow her to retire to a nunnery, the superior of which had offered to receive her. I agreed, and my mother the same day made up her mind, taking a promise from me at the same time, to visit her every day or at least thrice a week.

In the meantime I went according to agreement to Zaráyzeen. His servant shewed me into a parlour very neatly furnished, where I found Zaráyzeen walking up and down the room. He was a little man, had passed his fortieth year, was pale and thin, had a pair of penetrating eyes, and put on some odd grimaces similar to the imitations which lackeys attempt of their

master's airs. According to my system of physiognomy, his eyes and mouth indicated cunning, impudence, and cowardice. He wore over his eyes a green shade, although gifted with such extraordinary powers of vision, that he could see the smallest dot on the cards with his naked eye as with a microscope. His fingers were extremely long and thin. On his right hand, his first and middle finger were bound with black taffeta. He was continually engaged in shuffling and cutting the cards, even when he was in conversation with me, in order, as he said, not to lose time uselessly, and gradually to perfect himself in the mechanism of his profession. Yakoff Prokófyaaveetch was dressed in a peculiar way : his cravat was tied tightly about his neck, his wide-sleeved coat hung upon him as if it were on a peg, and his short small-clothes and boots which came up to his knees, gave his legs the appearance of twisted pillars of the Gothico-Arabic style of architecture. Yakoff Prokófyaaveetch seldom looked any man in the face with whom he happened to be speaking ; or if he did so, it was only when the conversation did not run upon business, but upon some collateral subject.

“ I beg you will be seated,” said Zaráyzeen, pointing to the sofa : “ Extremely glad to go together with you. Agraphéna Stepánovna was pleased to inform me that you were acquainted with my intimate friend Luke Ivanoveetch (Vorovaateen). A much esteemed, excellent man ! - - - He and I have done a deal of business together in our time. I am sorry I cannot learn where he is now.” I was silent. Zaráy-

zeen renewed the conversation : “ I heard that you have pleased to engage in high play, and have been very fortunate. May I ask—did you deal or punt ?” * “ I punted, but played more at games of skill.” “ I understand you : with *your own cards*, with *partners* ; † but at faro you have assuredly pleased to play with *your own people*, for *sale* ?” ‡ “ Neither the one nor the other. I played fairly.” “ Ah, so much the better : but Agraphéna Stepánovna did not please to tell me that you played *fairly*.” I looked into Zaráyzeen’s face to signify my amazement and non-comprehension of his expression. “ You do not please to understand,” says he, “ what is the meaning of *fairness* ? It means dexterity, expertness.” At these words, Zaráyzeen made a movement with his fingers as if he wished to make his joints crack. “ No, you do not guess correctly,” replied I : “ Agraphéna Stepánovna told you, and I repeat it, that I know nothing at all of cards, and that if you wish me to be useful to you, you must initiate me into the mysteries of your art.” “ To be sure, you must learn something of it,” replied Zaráyzeen : “ will you take the trouble to walk into my cabinet ? I will give you the first practical lesson by shewing you the instruments.”

* Play against the bank.

† Partner is one of three who conspire together in a game of skill, to fleece a fourth person ; sometimes they play with *marked*, that is to say, their *own* cards.

‡ The banker goes snacks with many people, and having made a previous agreement with some one of his friends, shuffles the pack in a certain way, or lets his friend know what card will gain, who of course carries off the stakes. This is called ‘ *to sell*.’

From the parlour we went into a cold room where there was a variety of different articles in the greatest confusion. Pictures, porcelain, bronze figures, horse-furniture, *meerschauum*-pipes, and rich fowling-pieces were lying about the windows, chairs, tables, and floor. There were besides, here and there, chests and cases of wines, &c. All these things were covered with a thick coat of dust and dirt. In the next room, or cabinet, all the three windows were hung with green Venetian blinds. Under the windows stood small tables covered with large sheets of paper, and in the middle of the room was a large table covered with green cloth. Zaráyzeen went up to one of the small tables, took off the paper, and I saw some *tailles* of cards, and on a plate, dark-blue and red paint rubbed down, and some crow-quills.

“I suppose you may guess,” said Zaráyzeen, “that this is the pictorial branch of our art, that is to say, *dotting*. The best cards for *dotting* are those whose backs are finished with spots. By one extra dot in a known place, one can read the other side as well as if the pack lay open. Cards are *dotted* in the middle for *verkhovka*. You do not know the meaning of *verkhovka*?” “No, sir.” “Please to observe : you deal your *own* cards, and when the punting takes place, you always know what lies uppermost : by this means you are insured from the loss of your *sleepers*. This is a most impregnable play, and is only made use of against experienced gamblers. The advantage is here not more than ten per cent.

“Look at these cards with *dotting* on the edges; they

serve for catching the *sleepers*. An eye that is sure and sharp, sees sometimes the fourth card in the banker's pack, and then adieu to the bank ! These are banker's cards with *dots* on the corners, in order that, by knowing when a card goes with a parcel of other cards, you may draw it from under."

Zaráyzeen after this pulled out a drawer in the table, took out a snuff-box, and put it into my hand. "Do you see any thing about this ?" asked he. "Nothing particular, but that it is weighty and very well made," replied I ——. "It is weighty because it is inlaid with gold, and the top is of platina, and because its weightiness is of great use. Don't you see that its outer bottom is surrounded with a small seam or rim, and that the very centre of the bottom is ornamented with a little flower which has a small projecting point ? Please to observe now—here for instance I am banker." On this Zaráyzeen sat down at the table, took the cards into his hand, and continued the demonstration. "Suppose that I see, that the second card would be a great acquisition to the *ponteur*. I place the cards upon the table, cover the pack with my snuff-box, as it were out of precaution to prevent the *ponteurs* from seeing them : I take out my handkerchief and wipe my nose, then I open my snuff-box, take snuff, proceed to cast off, and lo, you see, the seven which should have been upon the left, lies upon the right." "How has this happened ?" ask I in amazement.— "This is the way. In the snuff-box there are two bottoms, one of gold, the other of platina. The gold one is thin and elastic, and in the platina bottom that

flower is fixed on a spring, and the projecting point smeared with an imperceptible portion of wax or glue. When I take snuff, I press the centre with my finger, the uppermost card sticks to the flower upon the snuff-box, and is kept snugly within the rim, while the second card becomes the uppermost. Now for the other card which I want to place on the right. Exactly in the same way I place the snuff-box on the cards, press the bottom with my fingers, and the card is discharged from the flower, and lodged on the top, while that which should have gained in the first cast-off is a losing concern to the *ponteur* in the second. Isn't it true, that this is very nice?" I nodded in token of assent. "This is a new Petersburg invention of a bosom-friend of mine who is on the best terms with the artists, who, you know, must not be fallen out with. You see people of skill cannot be caught but by the most simple expedients. I have also a favourite black coat which I am in the practice of wearing during play.—In the right sleeve of that coat there is also a mechanical contrivance for picking up cards. It deserves to be called a miracle rather than an invention: I will shew it you afterwards. You have only to lean your arm upon the pack, and the card vanishes, the same as with the snuff-box."

We proceeded to another small table, and Zaráy-zeen having taken off the paper, pointing to a heap of cards, continued:—"These are *prattlers*, that is to say, a certain number of cards shaped in such a way, that when they are shuffled among the rest, the broad ones may be picked out and brought together by calcu-

lation. There are a number of *prattlers*, and they are arranged by different keys. There are some where all the first thirteen cards lose, that is to say, where the *ponteur* does not gain a single trick : there are light *prattlers* with a variety of *bends* and with false *inequalities*. *Prattlers* are only used in playing with green-horns. Now-a-days, please to observe, the world is grown wiser ! Here are the different cuts of cards for arranging the hands in shuffling. For this one must have an uncommon agility of fingers, more so than is required in fashionable piano-fortists, and this talent is acquired only by time and labour. You see that my fingers are tied up—please to observe, the skin of these fingers is so filed off, and the body of them is so softened with ointment, that, during play, I can guess the cards by the mere sense of touch, and the points are suppler than any spring. But you will not soon arrive at such a degree of perfection : that is the fruit of my twenty years' experience, joined to incredible exertions. You will be my *croupier*, and so it will be necessary for you to attend chiefly to the *punting*, and to look after the players at my bank. I cannot attend to this, as I shall be taken up in the more abstract contemplations of the art, in order to make use of my banking experience, while you in the meantime see that no false brothers steal a march upon us by introducing themselves under the mask of green-horns."

We passed to a third table, and Zaráyzeen, on removing the paper as formerly and shewing me different cards, continued his lecture. "Here you see this

three. Look again—once ! There is a *deuce*—once again ! and here is an *ace*.” Zaráyzeen merely lifted the card from the table, and the spots on the card actually changed at his command. “Do you know what that is ?” asked Zaráyzeen. “This is a Russian invention, though it has a French name, and for the former reason it is not so terrible a machine as its name’s sake. This is a *guillotine*. Here please to observe—I unglue, and to this watch-spring are fixed cut spots. The watch-spring is placed in the centre, and its end is upon the edge of the card. Moving the end with the finger, the spots appear or disappear at pleasure. The *guillotine* can be made out of all cards except figures. But I have also reserve-figures or masques. Please to notice—here on one card is a king and queen, on another a knave and king, &c. This is made of figures with two heads. The painted card is unglued and opened, and changeable heads put on. For *dark* cards and for *sleepers* this is very well. These other cards are a little more ingenious. Do you see, here I place a *seven* : the *six* will gain, and my card immediately changes into a *six*. These are *sprinkled* spots. A spot is made upon the card with fine glue, and is sprinkled with a fine powder or burnt bones. The card of course is *dark* ; and, if one of my cards has gained, I turn this up as it is, and gain this trick also : if another should gain before I play this card, I cancel a spot before turning my card, and again pocket the money.

“Here are *sacks*—this card, you will please to observe, is dissected in the middle, and an empty space

is left in it for inclosing bank-notes. If the card should lose, the *ponteur* takes the card from the table and leaves some bank-notes ; if this card should gain, the *ponteur* dexterously shakes out the bank-notes from the sack, and the banker pays sometimes ten-fold, particularly in case of gaining the corners.

“ Please to look into this box ! Here are instruments—a *wolf's tooth* for glazing *dotted* cards ; cherry glue ; here are *brass plates* of different forms for cutting the cards with those small scissars. And here in the cup-board stands a *press* for squeezing together cards which had been ripped up and newly shut.—Would you like to know what is on that large table under the green-cloth ? *Prepared cards*. But for the first time you have had enough. Come, walk into the other room, we shall have breakfast and a little chat about our approaching campaign.”

Breakfast already stood on the table, but there was neither plate nor wine. Zaráyzeen took the keys out of his pocket, called his footman, and returned with the wine and table-service. When the footman left the room, I said :—“ Surely that servant of yours behaves ill, when you do not intrust him with silver ?” “ I have observed nothing to his prejudice during the course of ten years service,” replied Zaráyzeen : “ but I, sir, am accustomed to trust no one ; for that is the very best preventive against being taken in by any one. Why should we expose ourselves to an unnecessary evil ? ‘ Do not lead into temptation !’ Why furnish a man with an opportunity to rob you ?” I made no reply, but inwardly cursed my love which made me a

colleague of such a hellish creature. "Please to observe," said Zaráyzeen : "Agraphéna Stepánovna is a very good girl and an old acquaintance of mine besides ; but she is a little thoughtless, a little too fond of her own way, and a little inclined to throw away her money. We should not then entirely trust her with all our affairs and all our pecuniary transactions. She is ready to forewarn a man if he pleases her fancy ; and, if she knows exactly the amount of our winnings, she is capable, whenever she is in straits, of demanding from us more than justly falls to her share. Do you please to understand me ? I have a practice when I play on joint account with any one, to dislodge from the bank into my boots : you ought to do the same when I make a wry face, and say to you, '*the boots pinch.*' After this we will go home and settle together." "We shall see !" said I, and made haste to leave Zaráyzeen in order to return to Groonya.

"Thou hast brought me acquainted with a confounded rascal !" said I to Groonya. "Thou certainly dost not suppose," replied she, "that for biting biters I should choose an honest man ? A truce to childishness, Vanya : thou art quite tiresome with thy school-boy virtue. We shall rob nobody of his money, but will only take it from those who wish for an opportunity to get rid of it. Otherwise, if the thing is disagreeable to thee, I shall not press it upon thee : but in that case, thou must lay aside thy intolerable jealousy." "I have resolved !" exclaimed I almost in tears, and went home in order to conduct my mother to her nunnery, promising to return to Groonya in

the evening. Zaráyzeen was then to open his first sitting.

After attending my mother, I returned home with a sore heart, and stretched myself out upon a sofa. Petroff entered the room, and standing at the door in the attitude of *attention*, said: "Will your honour allow his devoted Petroff to offer a word of advice?" "Speak." "We have no money!" "No; and so, go and seek service with some one who has money." "Forefend me God from that: you are my benefactor, Ivan Ivanoveetch, and I will not leave you till death. A soldier wants but little; a cloak on his shoulders, and a biscuit in his wallet. I can work with the neighbours for a daily ration, and will be always ready to serve your honour. But it is not that which I come to speak about." "What is it then which thou would'st be at?" "Agraphéna Stepánovna is a — — pretty woman!" "I know that without thy telling." "Fawning as a rabbit, chattering as a swallow, with a windpipe like a lark!" "Is that the case?" "Yes, Sir; she spends more money in a day, than a whole company of grenadiers in a month." "What business hast thou with that?" "Business, your honour! because I love you more than my own father, love you as I did the commander of our company, peace to his soul: he died of his wounds in my arms? Do you think I do not know how your money has slipped through the tender, white little fingers of Agraphéna Stepánovna?" "That is no affair of thine." "No affair of mine, but a vexation of mine! Your honour, Ivan Ivanoveetch! I would be glad to

lay down my life for you, and it sickened me and grieved me to see, that on account of Agraphéna Stepánovna your own aunt Adelaida Petrovna has been obliged to leave the house, and you yourself will soon have no where to lay your head in the wide world. If a man is to perish, better let it be by a cannon-ball, or a bullet, than by a hussey's hankerings. We will come to no good with these Moscow beauties. Why can't you enter the military service and climb the Caucasus? Here, Sir, you cannot do without carriages and furniture, and a score of suits of clothes, and God knows what else : but there, a young officer wants nothing but his own good sword and his courage ; and you are well supplied both with the one and the other. Besides, the life there is a life of cheerfulness ! Every divine day a skirmish, yes and with what boys, what marksmen, what horsemen, who, except the Russians, don't fear the devil himself. Capital wines, superb mutton, delicate bread, and what girls ! They say that the Turkish Sultan himself in his burgh of the Tzars wishes for nothing better. There is only one misery for a Russian soldier, that he cannot always get a drink of *quass* or a bowl of *shtchee*, but to you, Sir, that will be no privation. Oh, if your honour would but listen to an old soldier ! You would see how nicely the breezes of the Caucasus would blow away the vapours of love ; and you may depend upon it, the Circassian horsemen would take your fancy more than Agraphéna Stepánovna."

I was really pleased with Petroff's proposal, but love and debt kept me in Moscow. " I thank thee,

brother, for thy advice, and doubly thank thee for thy love. I will consider of what thou hast said, and tell thee on the first opportunity. In the meantime give me my coat : I must go out."

The *soiree* at Groonya's was splendid. She had invited some first-rate beauties among the actresses, and a number of the wealthy amateurs of the drama, who admire that art less in the spirit than in the flesh, and in the comely incarnations of the dramatic muse. The company was at first engaged in conversation and music ; then as it were to clear off old scores, Zaráyzeen and I sat down in the corner-room to play at *shtoss*.* Groonya, as if in jest, begged one of her rich guests to join her in stripping the bank, adding that she was very fortunate in drawing cards for *pon-teurs*. Some ladies' men begged Groonya to draw cards for them. The play began at first on a small scale : it gradually grew deeper, and before it was concluded, Zaráyzeen emptied all the pocket-books. It was kept up till six o'clock next morning, and, after the guests departed, we divided the winnings into three shares, and each of us got about eight thousand roubles. Zaráyzeen, however, was very much displeased with me, because I asked him if his boots did not pinch his legs ; and obliging him to take them off before me, I found in them two heaps of bank-notes and a handful of gold. In order to pacify Zaráyzeen, I told him that I did this merely in order to quiet the suspicions of Groonya, who saw him in

* A species of *faro*.

the act of putting money into his boots. The rogue did not believe me, but feigned that he did so. In this way, the smallest departure from the road of honesty brings with it a multitude of evils. Becoming connected with a gambler to cheat others, I became at once a liar to cheat Zaráyzeen, conceiving there was no harm in paying a rogue in his own coin. This easy acquisition of money turned my head and stifled my conscience. I returned home quite cheerful; threw the money into my *commode*, and gave Petroff a twenty-five rouble note, saying: "On the Caucasus, brother, it may be good living, but in Moscow it is better. Let us first take our cheer here, and afterwards we shall see!"

CHAPTER VIII.

Card-Table Swindlers.—Letter from Meloveeden.—He finds his Wife.—Petronella's Repentance.—Bankrupt-sequestration in Poland, or check and mate to creditors.—The end of Mr. Golgordoffsky.—Mr. Ponteeſky, his other Son-in-Law.

THE profession of a card-table swindler unites in itself all the vices which degrade humanity. There is no meanness of which a swindling gambler is not capable, in order to draw into his toils a man who has a passion for play. Card-table swindlers, like real demons, rack their brains to invent all sorts of temptations to deprive a man of his worth and good name, to drag him into the slough of vice, and ruin his family. And yet these people are received into first-rate society, and enjoy all the privileges accorded to birth and merit. A poor thief that has stolen twenty-five roubles, though it were to keep him from starving, is punished as a culprit, while these regular thieves drive about proudly in rich equipages, live on habits of intimacy with the first nobility, look down with contempt on a poor but honest man from whom they can fleece nothing, and even take upon them to criticise the actions of other people. Poor humanity—such are thy customs! Who is to blame? The laws condemn a swindling gambler to opprobrium and punishment, but custom interferes to prevent these regular thieves from

exposure and justice. It is not, however, our business to step in between the biter and the bitten. If those who are concerned are ashamed to drive the wolves from their premises, let the wolves take such liberties as they please with the sheep ; let them even fall upon the shepherds, till your own persons and property come under their fangs. All in good time !

The gaming in Groonya's house gradually increased, and the company became more numerous. It is a true saying that what is gained by injustice does not last. Groonya and I gave no thought to calculation, and accordingly knew no bounds to our desires. Light comes, light goes. Our gambling establishment became notorious, and we were obliged to admit into our partnership some of the most skilful adepts, to prevent them from disturbing us ; and while Groonya and I squandered our money on dress, furniture, equipages, horses, dinners, and suppers, our colleagues plucked one another, and lost among their own fraternity what they had gained by fraud from others. Besides, card-table swindlers are seldom or never good domestic characters, or modest and quiet members of society. In wine, in riot, and debauchery, they endeavour to forget their degradation, to stifle the voice of conscience, and to cover their meanness with a cloak of riches and luxury. Quiet and solitude are preliminary torments to a guilty mind.

Unfortunately, in the human animal, distinction of breed is not always accompanied with superior endowments ; and throughout the world it is proverbial that every family has a misbegotten member. In our swind-

ling copartnery there were two sprigs of nobility—Prince Plootolsky and Count Tonkovóreen. The first had drawn back from an advantageous match, had given up his good connections, and left the service, and now led a debauched life, appeared always in public as if he was half tipsy, and broke through all decorum by his extravagant behaviour. He was still in the prime of life, and might have sat to a painter for the representative of a desperate robber. His red tunid face, overgrown with immense whiskers, expressed daring and intemperance; his eyes were always full and strained with blood like those of a hyæna; his pouting lips opened only to eat, drink, and growl. Count Tonkovóreen was an elderly man: he had gone through fire and water, had acquired and spent several fortunes, and, being all his life on the worst terms with conscience, he at last selected, in preference to every other line of life, the profession of a card-table swindler. He had every vice, and only one quality in common with honest men—intrepidity. But, as he made use of that quality for nothing but mischief, he acquired among his fraternity the name of *the brave corsair*. Count Tonkovóreen lived in a showy luxurious style, gave elegant dinners, and gay *soirees*, and fleeced at his own house not only green-horns, but adepts in the art. Zaráyzeen admitted these two worthies into partnership, from fear lest they should murder him—at the same time as a counterpoise to balance or check their preponderance, he selected two of the deepest and most notorious plebeian rascals, named Oodáveetch and Yádeen.

Oodáveetch, a man of middle years, of a sallow complexion and little figure, was deep as a demon. He spent his time mostly among the merchants, and was besides a money-lender. Among rich merchants it is reckoned a mark of *bon ton* to squander money in the company of friends, and they pride themselves upon their expenditure, the same as in more refined circles they pride themselves upon their penetration, punning, and address. Every rich merchant reckons it a duty to spend some days of merry-making in the course of the year; and the publicans, strumpets, and card-table swindlers anxiously lay in wait for the coming round of these days, to avail themselves of the stupefaction of the senses in which the rich merchant indulges, in order to lighten him of his superfluous burden. The card-table swindlers are besides in the habit of keeping up a friendly intercourse with young merchants' sons, who begin to squander even in their parent's life-time. Oodáveetch lent money at high interest, traded in bills, and fleeced at play his mercantile friends who resorted to his house, because they found there all the gratifications of debauchery. Yádeen, besides his natural sense, was tolerably polished in his manners, had read much, spoke fluently and agreeably, kept up an acquaintance with *literati* who were not aware of his profession, with actors, and with people in general who had pretensions to wit. In his own house he carried on play on a small scale, and darted, as the saying is, on his prey upon the wing, when he chanced to see a green-horn in the circle of his acquaintances. One thing alone astonished me, to wit, how these rascals

could find people so simple as to put any trust in them, when nature had stamped them so evidently with the seal of reprobation. At the first sight of all these adventurers, I read in their faces the whole of their hellish propensities. I believe, that an evil mind is expressed in the physiognomy. Unbelieving readers ! look only in the face of the first card-table swindler, or the first hypocrite whom you meet, and be convinced !

This was the company in which I was condemned to live, through my blind attachment to Groonya, who lulled my conscience with her caresses and kind words, and stupified my reason with her bewitching arguments. Time slipped away, and almost a year had elapsed since I began to share in the booty of my swindling confederates. One day, when there was no playing at our house, Groonya sent me on an errand to Oodaveetch, to concert measures with him what to do with Zaráyzeen who had begun to cheat us through thick and thin. At Oodaveetch's house I found Prince Plootolsky, Count Tonkovóreen, Yadeen, two other professors, and upwards of a dozen of merchants, amongst whom were some rich long-beards. They were all in high glee, and had just returned from a holiday-excursion which they had made to some taverns out of town. Footmen were carrying about Champagne and Madeira ; gipsy-women half tipsy, and gipsy-men quite tipsy, were strutting about the rooms ; the merchants were ranting and entering into friendly explanations with one another, and reciting their old complaints : females of a certain description

were peeping slyly through a half-open door of a back-room : the gamblers in the throng were whispering and winking to one another : a one-eyed music-grinder was working lustily at an organ in the anti-chamber. I made a stop, looked around me, and immediately conjectured that this freak would end in something of a graver sort. Oodaveetch came up to me, gave me a significant hint, took me into a dark corridore, and in an under-tone told me to behave myself discreetly, for that there was a weighty matter preparing, in which I should receive a share of the spoil if I promised to tell no one, particularly gamblers, of what had happened. I promised to be silent, chiefly out of curiosity, and we returned into the rooms. Oodaveetch in the mean time grew livelier, and set himself to play the part of a cordial landlord. He went through all the guests, one by one, kissing and embracing them, and bawling out loudly : " Gentlemen ! why, you are grown dull : are you wearied, or what ails you ? Hey : Champagne ! Away with the glasses and give us our great-grandfathers' *stowps* ! " * Ivan Merkooleetch, drink if you please : Semen Patrickéyeetch, Phoma Nazareetch, drink, brothers ! Here, Paphnooteetch, thou funny fellow, a truce to thy nonsense. Wine. Bring it hither ! Isn't it true that it is good stuff ? I ordered it myself from Petersburg from Boiseaunet. Now Steshka, sing something more sprightly : organist, play Ivan Merkooleetch's favourite ! And you, ye husseys, Masha,

* *Stowp* signifies the same thing in Russian as in Scotch.

Vaseeleessa, Parasha, dance some famous gipsey dance to tickle the gentlemen's fancies !” While Oodaveetch was talking, at one time with the merchants, at another time with the gipseys, the wine ran in torrents, and the other gamblers also plied the guests with kisses, embraces and entreaties. When all their heads were pretty light, Ivan Merkooleetch, a rich merchant with a most respectable beard, the father of a family, a man who at home lived all the year round on cabbage-soup, and buck-wheat porridge, drank nothing but quass and bitters, higgled for a few kopeeks with his shopmen, and clung to a difference of a rouble in bargaining, as a question of life and death ; while in taverns he would finish whole cases of Champagne, and in his drunkenness play away tens of thousands : Ivan Merkooleetch for whom Oodaveetch had such a regard, came up to him, tapped him familiarly on the shoulder and said : “ What is the meaning of all this nonsense ? let us have a little *bank*,* Cleem Yegóreetch !” “ I am afraid,” replied Oodaveetch ; “ for I know, you, Ivan Merkooleetch, are a desperate player, and sweep away the bank in a twinkling. With such rogues as you we must be on our guard : did not I hear that you gained at *gorka* sixteen thousand roubles from Seedor Seedorreetch ?” “ And what is the harm of that ! I gain and I lose : none of thy foolery now, Cleem Yegoro-veetch, but give us a little bank.” “ I shall do so, provided it be in a small way !” said Oodaveetch with

* A general term for faro and other similar games of chance.

a wry face. "No, brother, I will have none of your small stakes." "I see I can make nothing of thee; I shall throw thee a matter of ten thousand," said Oodaveetch, and ordered the tables to be produced.

The gamblers were immediately on their legs. They could not conceal their joy, and their eagerness was quite visible. Oodaveetch laid down the money, and proceeded to deal. But before he took the cards into his hands, Yadeen called out: "Wine, wine, Champagne!" They brought in some bottles of wine, and Yadeen himself took upon him to help the guests who sat at the card-table, while those who did not play were drawn under different pretences into other rooms where Prince Plootolensky, Count Tonkovóreen and other gamblers proposed to them to take a drive by way of fun. The merchants jumped at the proposal, and at the opportunity afforded them of merry-making with Counts and Princes, and with one accord they all set off. Yadeen and Oodaveetch again applied themselves to serve the guests with wine, and I soon perceived that they were completely besotted: they played their cards without any discernment, drew them at improper times, and mechanically followed the directions of Oodaveetch who scored against them whatever he chose, with his own hands took their pocket-books out of their pockets, helped himself to their money, dealt all at once two cards to each, and in a word, treated them like irrational creatures. The drunkenness appeared to me a strange sight, but still more strange was the effrontery of Oodaveetch, who

openly plundered his guests while they sat nodding at the card-table. One of the gamblers, who probably thought that I had also been invited to assist in carrying the manœuvre into execution, took me into another room, and said : “ Really that Oodaveetch is a devil incarnate, and no man ! He has given them an infusion of the thorn-apple to drink, but has taken care not to let a drop of it touch his mustachios. He has emptied their pocket-books without the smallest trouble, and, besides, scored a thousand against every one of them, while these asses have been neither playing nor beaten ! He is an arch-rogue, there can be no doubt ! ”

At this moment Prince Plootolsky and Count Tonkovóreen came into the room. “ Is the business finished yet ? ” asked the Prince. “ Finished ; ” replied my companion. “ That is right, but for our part, we have had hard work to get rid of those d——d shopkeepers—they wished to come here to supper—order the gate to be shut and nobody to be admitted within the court-yard. Let them be told that Cleem Yegóroveetch has gone to the governor’s to spend the evening, and that there is nobody in the house. You know that we have no more occasion for these jackasses, when the game is already bagged.” In the mean time Oodáveetch did not leave the spot, but kept watch over the senseless *ponteurs* as a serpent does over its prey ; and as soon as the gamblers observed that the intoxicated guests began to move upon their chairs, and that the sleepiness and delirium were passing away, Prince Plootolsky and Count Tonkovóreen sat down

at the table, and began intentionally to punt. "Now, how have our affairs turned?" said Ivan Merkooleetch, rubbing his eyes and scratching his forehead. "There was such a buzz and confusion got up all of a sudden in my head, that I could not keep myself awake. Let us reckon up now." "Here stands against you twenty-three thousand three hundred and twenty-seven roubles and a half," said Oodáveetch coolly. "How so?" exclaimed the astounded merchant. "Why, because it is so. You lost all your ready money, and when you had nothing to pay with, you ordered it to be marked against you—I would trust you though it were for a million, and so I obeyed you." "Lost my ready money!" exclaimed the merchant, laying hold of his pocket-book: "There were seventeen thousand roubles here!" "I did not count how much there was," replied Oodáveetch coolly. In the mean time the other *ponteurs* also rubbed their eyes, began to count up, and were quite astonished that all their pocket-books were empty, besides, to see large sums marked against each of them. One tea-merchant, a young man, out of whose pocket-book Oodáveetch had taken ten thousand roubles, grew quite desperate, cried, and fell into a passion, saying that he would have to drown himself if he could not pay a bill which became due the next day. Oodáveetch continued cool, but when Ivan Merkooleetch and the others began to sing in the same key, and to insist that the debt should be cancelled as they did not recollect upon having contracted it, then Prince Plootolensky and Count Tonkovóreen came forward to play that part in the farce for which their

talents so well adapted them. “How durst thou presume to say before such an honourable company that thou dost not recollect the debt which thou hast contracted? Are we not all witnesses? Are we not all ready to swear to the fact? We will teach thee better manners, thou low reptile, and squeeze thy soul out of thy body before we part with thee.” The other gamblers also all united in blustering and bullying, and, at this moment, a troop of footmen and gipseys appeared at the doors. The merchants lost courage and lowered their tone. Peace was restored—notaries were sent for, but luckily they were already in waiting in the anti-chamber. Ivan Merkooleetch and his companions gave their bills: Oodáveetch gave the tea-merchant a loan of ten thousand roubles, but took his bill for twenty thousand, and every thing went on sweetly. Supper was served up, and the guests, from pure vexation, ate and drank to excess, and some of them, among the rest Ivan Merkooleetch, stopped all night, quite comfortable, after having consigned their money and bills to oblivion. I received for neither one thing nor another four thousand roubles, and again passed my word not to make any mention of the transaction.

Meloveeden had written to me after his departure from Moscow in search of his wife: up to that time his endeavours had been unsuccessful. Not receiving any letters from him for more than half a year, I grew anxious about the fate of my friend. On returning home from Oodáveetch’s, to my greatest joy, I found a large packet from Meloveeden. He informed me

that, at last, he had found his Petronella. I shall here communicate to my readers Meloveeden's letter at full length.

“ Like the knight of the rueful countenance, I wandered through Poland in search of the place to which my wife had retired. By means of the all-knowing Jews, I understood that she had taken up her residence in the neighbourhood of Cracow, but could not find out the actual spot. Chance, as usually happens, favoured me more than my own endeavours. Petronella had assumed the calling of a ‘sister of mercy,’ and in order to make amends for the sins of her youth, she devoted herself as a living sacrifice to suffering humanity : she waited upon the sick in an hospital. Thou art aware that the ‘sisters of mercy’ do not take upon themselves the monastic vows, and can leave their calling when they please ; but it cost me a great deal of trouble to persuade her to return with me into the world which she had renounced. It was only the undoubted proofs of my love to her, evidenced by the wandering life to which I had given myself up in search of her, that induced Petronella to go along with me. She was extremely glad when she heard of thy change of condition, and sends up her prayers to the Most High for thy prosperity, in return for all which thou hast done for me. Of course she is much changed, but, though her youth is gone, she has not lost her beauty. Her giddiness has quite disappeared, and she has now become rigid towards herself and condescending towards others, contrary to the usual practice of women, who are wont to be

guided by vanity after they have reformed themselves in all other respects. Thou surely wishest to know what has become of Gologordoffsky and his family. My father-in-law, by living above his income, by continually incurring fresh debts without paying the old ones, and by following the counsels of the Jew-farmer in his trading operations, was obliged at last to declare himself bankrupt. Thou knowest that in Old Poland the aristocracy were the legislators for the whole kingdom ; as a natural consequence of which, every thing was contrived for their own benefit. What in the world could be fairer for all parties, than to sell the property of a bankrupt to the highest bidder, and to apply the proceeds arising from the sale towards the payment of the creditors ? In order that the owners of property might not contract debts to a greater amount than they had the means of discharging, what could be juster than that all property should be valued, and every debt entered in a public register on the security of that property ? In that case the creditors who did not chuse to run blind risks, would lose nothing but the interest of their money. But, notwithstanding the number of wise men whom Poland has produced, and the excellent laws which they framed, so far as regarded the general policy of the state ; yet, on questions relating to the debts of the gentry, the levying of taxes, and other pecuniary matters, a foolish, perverse *veto* checked all attempts to reform the system. My father-in-law having become bankrupt, declared an *exdivisio* (sequestration) or division of the property among the creditors, as prescribed by the

laws of Lithuania. The creditors chose among themselves judges or arbiters from among the neighbouring gentry, allowing my father-in-law his legal prerogative of choosing judges also on his side. In addition to this, a chancery was formed of some *regents* or secretaries, and clerks, and each side appointed an advocate for itself. The property was put under the controul of this court, but only upon paper, and the actual management intrusted to my mother-in-law, who, for the dowry which she had brought into the family, and for bills granted in her favour on the eve of the bankruptcy, was a considerable creditor of her husband's. At an appointed time, the judges, regents, and advocates, assembled together, along with their servants and dogs. They had all to be fed and entertained at the expense of the property belonging to the creditors. The business was kept up for a considerable length of time, as the judges and lawyers found it very convenient to live at the expense of others in pleasant company. Mr. Gologordoffsky, in order to ingratiate himself with the judges, entertained them sumptuously, (at the expense of the creditors,) invited to the *exdivisio* all his relations who had good-looking daughters, gave balls, hunts, and lived in better style than ever. The judges played at cards, flirted with the ladies, fell in love, got drunk, danced; but the *chanceries* in the meantime proceeded at a snail's pace, urged on, however, by the lawyers who began to be impatient for their fees. At length, after the lapse of two years and a half, the *exdivisio* was brought to a conclusion. The estate was divided

upon the plan, in a manner resembling the squares upon a chess-board, and the lots assigned to the creditors in proportion to their claims. My mother-in-law got the very best part, which was worth thrice as much as her dower. Other creditors of rank, and relations of Mr. Gologordoffsky, had lots with peasants assigned them, while the creditors who happened to be poor and absent, were put off with a dividend of moor-land, brush-wood, and sandy wastes, at a higher valuation than the fields of India, covered with cinnamon, cloves, and sugar-canes. My father-in-law was much richer after the *exdirisio* than he had been before it, as he received back the very best part of the property ; and with barren land, and at a small sacrifice, discharged debts which exceeded twice the value of his whole estate. The creditors too, after paying the judges for their attendance, the salaries of the chancery-clerks, the advocates, the land-measurers, and the government-dues, were quite ruined. Some of them prudently withdrew their claims, in order to be freed from the expences, which were twice as much as the whole amount of the debts.

“ Gologordoffsky did not live long after this for him fortunate occurrence, but died of a bilious fever brought on in consequence of an affront from the *government-marshal*, whose grandfather was a poor *Shlyakhteetch*, and had served under Gologordoffsky’s grandfather : this gentleman took his seat higher than Mr. Gologordoffsky in the church, and was invited to dine with the governor, an honour not vouchsafed to my father-in-law. His last words were addressed to the Jew-

farmer : “ Josel,” says he, “ the day of judgment is at hand ! Time was, when the thunder did not dare to strike a Polish *Shlyakhteetch*, but now a Mongrel-Tartar puppy of a governor thinks it beneath him to invite to his table the pink of *Shlyakhteetches*, the first-born of the Gologordoffskys !” After saying this, he smiled proudly, and surrendered his soul to God.

“ Fortunately there chanced to come to Byalo-Russia on business, a country-gentleman from the government of Grodno, Podkomoree Potchteevsky. He fell in love with my sister-in-law Cecilia, and, as the Potchteevsky family happened to be as illustrious and widely spread in the governments of Grodno and Wilna as that of the Gologordoffskys in Byalo-Russia, my mother-in-law consented to give him her daughter. In the meantime my brothers-in-law finished their education in the Jesuits’ College, where at least one good thing, a spirit of economy, was instilled into their minds. My mother-in-law left the management of her estate to her sons, and removed herself to her daughter’s residence in the government of Grodno.

“ After learning all these particulars, we set off from Cracow direct to Mr. Potchteevsky’s. Before arriving at the manor-house, we halted at a *kartchma* in order to arrange our dress. To my astonishment, the *kartchma* was a decent house with good clean rooms for travellers. There was no Jew in the *kartchma* : it was kept by a Christian, a cabinet-maker, who occupied one of the rooms for his work-shop, while his wife managed the house and traded in spirits. “ How is it that there is no Jew here ?” asked I of the land-

lord. “ The *Báreen* * has driven out the Jews from all his estates, and forbidden them not only to trade in spirits, but even to live in his villages. Owing to that, in the course of ten years, our peasants are so improved, that all the neighbouring proprietors envy us.” “ Your *báreen* probably takes pleasure in the welfare of his peasants.” “ He is a father and no *báreen*. In ten years, since he has had the property in his hands, he has improved all the fields, the peasants’ as well as his own, increased the live-stock, given the peasants horses, re-built their houses, established a school for the children, and takes more care of the health and condition of his peasants than of his own—he is loved and respected by all.”

“ I was glad to hear such favourable accounts of my brother-in-law, and we impatiently hurried to his house. I need not describe to you the joy of my Petronella at meeting with her mother and sister, who supposed her to be lost. Cecilia was happy with her noble and wise husband; she had by this time two sons, charming boys, and was big with her third child. From the time of our first meeting we became friends of Potchteevsky. He had been educated in the university of Wilna, and on leaving it, had received the degree of doctor in philosophy, had made the tour of Europe, and, on his return home, resolved to employ himself in the improvement of his estate, which had been wretchedly managed by the curators during his nonage. Potchteevsky speaks Russian tolerably, loves in general all

* The Russian word for master, as applied to the owners of land and serfs.

the Slavonic dialects, and regards all the Slavonic tribes as blood relations, all Slavonians as brothers, who ought to love one another and unite their endeavours to educate their countrymen, and to raise the standard of literature, that they may occupy a respectable place in the republic of art and science. I need not detail the arrangements about Potchteevsky's house ; I may merely say that he had neither law-agent nor commissary, nor Jew-confident ; that he had neither debts nor law-suits : in a word, the whole establishment was quite the reverse of the late Mr. Golordoffsky's.

“ After living for a couple of months with Potchteevsky, I received news from Kieff, that Avdotya Ivanovna, impatiently waiting for my uncle's death, in order to reap the fruits of his testament, fell at last into a consumption brought on by an excessive fit of screaming, and was seized by the clutches of death before my uncle, who is left quite in despair because he has nobody to plague him. It is said that Avdotya Ivanovna's daughter Leeza, is hastening with her husband to Kieff, to take her mother's place. By my friend's advice I am setting off for Kieff, and shall use my endeavours to reconcile myself with my uncle. I know not how it will end—but, in the meantime, fare you well, and write me to Kieff.”

CHAPTER IX.

A young mad-cap.—An amateur of the drama.—Ruin in a robbers' den.—Calamity.—Groonya's flight.—Honesty in wolf's clothing, or do not judge by appearances.—A selfish man.

THE young people of *haut ton* in Moscow resorted in great numbers on a shooting excursion to the country-seat of a young candidate for bankruptcy, who, after exhausting his ingenuity on all sorts of town extravagance, turned his attention to the same object in the country. He erected a theatre, set on foot a great hunting establishment, and opened in his house a sort of gratis-tavern. To this shooting party ladies were also invited, relations of the landlord along with their acquaintances, and Aneta, Meloveeden's cousin, obliged me to accompany her to assist in the merry-making. My absence was not to be longer than a week, and, after taking leave of Groonya, I set off.

We passed the time very pleasantly. The landlord, Falalay Gloopáshkeen never intermitted his endeavours to play the part of an English *lord*. His wooden house was luxuriously fitted up with the most fashionable furniture, with pictures, statues, and bronzes. His stable contained more than a hundred English horses, and he had upwards of three hundred hounds of different breeds. Among his attendants he had a number of foreigners—English, Germans, and French.

For a companion he kept a Frenchman, under the denomination of a *litterateur*, who was his private secretary : to an Englishman he paid a high salary merely to talk with him, and perfect him in the pronunciation of the English language. An Italian, an old rogue, lived with him as a sort of friend. He enjoyed the reputation of being a connoisseur of painting, antiques, and music. The Italian traded in the most paltry Italian pictures, mosaics, counterfeit antiques, and along with that was a usurer and messenger of gallantry. A German librarian served for a small salary, being attracted by his love for catalogues, of which there was a number in the library. Gloopáshkeen bought a whole company of players from an amateur of the drama, by name Kharakhóreen, who had squandered away his property but consoled himself for the loss by performing in all private theatres and managing his old troop. Gloopáshkeen's orchestra was also composed of serfs whom he had collected from different private orchestras. In the house there were about five hundred inmates fed at the expence of Gloopáshkeen, and serving merely for his diversion. It was difficult to keep from laughing at seeing the grave air of the beardless fool, who, fancying himself a great man, spoke about every thing in a decided tone ; pronounced his opinions upon politics in sentiments borrowed from his English companion ; delivered lectures upon literature in the words of his Frenchman, and spoke upon the arts under the prompting of the Italian. Many of the guests, without having the least idea of the subjects on which he spoke,

and knowing the sciences merely by name, looked upon him as a miracle of wisdom, and, while they enjoyed the luxuries of his table, loudly proclaimed that Russia would be happy if Gloopáshkeen were minister. This was also his own opinion, and, in expectation of the first dignities of the empire, he enrolled himself in the college of foreign affairs as a translator from the Russian into the French. To give him his due, his superiors had reason to be pleased with him ; for he performed his duty extremely well. A poor student was hired to translate for him the Russian papers into literal French, while his French companion dressed them up with all the elegancies of the French idiom. In this way Gloopáshkeen, fulfilling exactly the commissions of government, had a full right to claim rewards and promotion, and not without grounds expected to rise to an elevated rank. He is not the only one who has succeeded in attaining rewards by means of the brains and labours of others, nor the only one who has passed for a man of business and a great politician, by repeating the words of his companion : ‘ *Sic vos non vobis,*’ &c.

In the morning we went a hunting, after that we dined ; in the afternoon we were present at the performance of a tragedy and ballet, under the superintendence of Kharakhóreen ; and lastly, we danced, played cards, and supped. It was impossible to feel ennui, for Kharakhóreen’s performance afforded matter for laughing all day long. He was persuaded that there was not in the whole world a better declaimer than himself ; made frightful grimaces, roared in his

declamation like a wounded bear, and strutted about and brandished his arms like a madman. In order to accustom himself to wear the dress of ancient heroes and foreign marquisses, he always put on his theatrical costume in the morning of the day of performance, rouged his face, and spoke with all, even with the servants, in a theatrical tone. It was related of him, that, having equipped himself one day to play in a private theatre out of town, he set out thither in the morning in his dramatic costume. At the barrier his carriage was stopped, as usual, in order to inquire his rank and surname. Kharakhóreen declared his real name, but the sergeant on guard thinking he was showing false colours, sent him to the nearest police-office, and the inspector upon duty without listening to his reply consigned him to the lunatic hospital, where poor Kharakhóreen was detained till his friends gave security to the authorities, and convinced them that he was only a fool and not a madman. Kharakhóreen drilled all his troop into his own declamatory exercise, and owing to that, the spectators were horrified in comedies, and could not keep from laughing in tragedies. His ballets consisted in a sort of hopping, which was only endurable when the female dancers were possessed of other attractions. I would have remained longer in Gloopáshkeen's house, but unfortunately I was lodged in the same room as Kharakhóreen, and he tormented me so by reading to me his dissertations on the drama, that I was completely worried, and the sixth day made my escape from him to Moscow.

On arriving at home, I learned from Pétroff that a police officer had called every day for some days, and asked whether I was at home, as he wanted to speak with me about some affair or other. I ordered tea, and had scarcely emptied my first cup, when Pétroff informed me that the police-officer was there and asked permission to come in. He entered modestly and made a very respectful bow. Although his physiognomy was not expressive, a certain simplicity and kindness of manner prepossessed me in his favour. His uniform appeared as worn as the pavement, his hat seemed a relic of the last century, and the handle of his sword looked blue. He made a bow to me and said: "My duty is at present connected with yours, and I have been employed to trouble you by asking you some questions, to which you must answer immediately." "What is this which has happened?" asked I with uneasiness. "Be cool," replied the police-officer: "let us sit down and we will explain it together." An ink-glass was brought, and I immediately replied to the following questions:—

"How long is it since the College-secretary Vejeeghen became acquainted with the actress Agraphéna Stepánovna Preemankeen?" "Since my childhood. I became acquainted with her in the life-time of her mother, the Titular Counsellor's widow, Shtosceen." "How long is it since Vejeeghen became acquainted with Prince Plootolsky, Count Tonkovóreen, Zaráyzeen, Oodáveetch, and Yádeen?" "I became acquainted with them in Preemankeen's house, a year and a half ago." "Did Vejeeghen know of the in-

tentions of the aforesaid persons to swindle at play the two brothers Dooreendeen, who have lately come of age and borrowed three hundred thousand roubles in the *Opekoonsky Soryet* ?” * “ I did not know, and this is the first time that I heard of this intention and of the Dooreendeens.” “ Was Vejeeghen in the house of the aforesaid Preemankeen when the gaming took place between the above-named persons, when they intoxicated the Dooreendeens with some poisonous drug, and when a squabble occurred in which Zaráyzeen lost his left eye, Yádeen’s nose was broken, Prince Plootolensky’s right whisker plucked away, Oodáveetch’s forehead cut with a bottle, and Count Tonkovóreen’s forefinger knocked off, while the Dooreendeens received dangerous wounds in the head and breast, in consequence of which they are now dying ?” “ I was not, but was residing at the country-seat of Mr. Gloopáshkeen, and am only just returned after six day’s absence.” “ Does Vejeeghen know the place of concealment of the aforesaid Preemankeen, who is accused by all the above-named persons of having allured the said Door-eendeens to her house, of having intoxicated them with some drug, and of having invited the aforesaid Plootolensky, Tonkovóreen, Zaráyzeen, Oodáveetch, and Yádeen to plunder the Dooreendeens, and of having excited them to quarrel when the Dooreendeens were unwilling to pay the money which they had lost ?” At these words the pen fell out of my hands. “ How ! Groonya concealed herself ! Groonya left me !” ex-

* The name of the bank belonging to the Foundling-hospital.

claimed I in despair, and threw myself on the sofa, covering my face with my hands.—“ Agráphéna Stepánovna, calling herself Preemankeen, has pleased to quit Moscow, it is not known whither,” replied the police-officer coolly : “ and, as from the examination of the servants it appeared that you pleased every day to make repeated visits to the aforesaid Agráphéna Stepánovna, and lived on the most intimate footing with her, the authorities have thought proper to collect evidence from you, whether you know anything of this occurrence and of the place to which the above-named Preemankeen has retired.” “ I know nothing of it, and you see in what a condition I find myself since I heard of the misfortune of Preemankeen, whom I love, whom I wished to marry— — and now — — I am deprived of all !” “ I have already mentioned in the protocol the stupor into which you fell on hearing the news, and regarded that as a proof that you know nothing of what has happened,” said the police-officer. While he was writing and putting his papers in order, I grew a little cooler, considering that, in this unfortunate proceeding, it was better for Groonya that she had escaped from the clutches of the police, and consoled myself with the thought that perhaps this occurrence would incline her to follow my advice and turn into honest courses. I hoped to find her, to exculpate her by means of my friends : in a word, my grief suddenly changed into joy. “ Mr. officer,” said I, “ I am ready to confirm my evidence with my oath, and declare to you frankly that it was only my absence which saved me from this scrape. If I had been in

Moscow at the time, it is ten to one but I would have been implicated. Take your breath now, drink a cup of tea with me, and tell me more particularly the details of this ugly occurrence.” “ You appear to me to be a worthy open-hearted man,” said the police officer, “ and therefore I shall tell you my mind freely, to which I am the more inclined, as the neighbours all speak well of you, and in the precognitions which have taken place, you have been universally described as well behaved, generous and peaceable. Your servant Pétroff declares that there is not a better gentleman in all Moscow.” “ Enough, without farther preamble ! Tell me what you know, satisfy my curiosity, and I will be obliged to you.” The police officer rose from his seat, went up to the door on his tiptoes, looked into the other room, then returned without making the least noise, sat down, and after looking around him on every side, began to speak in an under tone. “ I am a little man, a *Kvartálny Nádzeeratl* (inspector of a quarter) a mute executor of the will of my superiors, but, thank God, I am neither deaf nor blind ; I have some little brains, and a clear conscience. What makes you stretch your neck so ? Why do you eye me so strangely, Ivan Ivanoveetch ? Yes, sir, I have a clear conscience, and owing to that” — — On this the *Kvartálny Nádzeeratl* pointed to his threadbare uniform and his faded-black hat, and continued : “ The Tchastnee Preestaf (overseer of the ward) knew that in Preemankeen’s house gambling was carried on to a great extent and in a dishonest manner, and that it was a rendezvous for the principal card-table swind-

lers of Moscow. But they are his tributary serfs whom a magistrate protects as a good landholder his industrious peasants, and so notwithstanding my reports the affair took its own course. The squabble with the Dooreendeens would have been passed over in silence if there had not been a complaint lodged by their grandfather, a man in power, who, by means of money and threats, obtained from Zaráyzeen a confession of every thing. Then Oodáveetch proposed to his companions and to the police-overseer to lay all the blame on Agrophéna Stepánovna, on the grounds that a new place might be opened for carrying on their gaming operations, while they themselves by these means would escape. In the meantime they gave Preemankeen a quiet hint to conceal herself, and the affair assumed another aspect. But, as it was necessary without delay to discover the guilty person, and inflict a suitable punishment to satisfy the Dooreendeens' grandfather, they contrived to hook in the old rogue Zaráyzeen, who was banished the town, and Yádeen locked up in the guard-house. The rest were not touched, and their *hetman* Oodáveetch remains safe and sound, of course, only for a season. Providence sooner or later will punish the culprit.

“Ivan Ivanoveetch ! I know all. Listen to good advice—disentangle yourself from those d——d gamblers, who will before long draw you into perdition. Forget the deceitful enchantress Preemankeen, who caressed you while at the same time she loved a Frenchman, an itinerant agent for a French manufacturer, and went off with him to Paris.” “Enough, enough !

That will finish me !” Wounded self-esteem and cheated love raised a strong commotion within my breast.— Fortunately I was able to weep, and that lightened my heart a little. “ And so Preemankeen has set off for Paris ?” asked I ——. “ It is true,” replied the Nádzeeratl : “ I was told all by her servant Catherine, the sweetheart of our sergeant. She says that Agraphéna Stepánovna loves you much, very much, but that you are too sentimental, and torment her with your jealousy,—on the contrary, the little Frenchman is cheerful, and so far from jealous that he delights to hear of the conquests of Agraphéna Stepánovna. She preferred the Frenchman, but, when she set off with him, wept bitterly for you.” I felt as if I was on the rack at this relation, but my natural pride and some remains of wholesome reason kept up my strength. After a short silence, I collected my breath and said : “ Why did you put these questions to me, when you were aware that I had no hand in this affair of the Dooreendeens, and did not know of Preemankeen’s flight ?” “ That, sir, was for form’s sake. The overseer of our ward, to shew his zeal and endeavours to discover the truth, entangled it with as many *names* as possible, and collected a great variety of evidence. In proportion to the number of persons examined, and in proportion to the bulk of the papers, the merit of the service performed will be appreciated.”

I wished not to remain alone, and asked the Nádzeeratl to sup with me. He consented, and till such time as Petroff had the table covered, I strided up and down the rooms, reflecting upon my condition, and

upon the repeated deceit of Groonya, who had twice brought me into misfortune. On the first occasion, I lost my liberty from my love to her ; now I had lost my capital, and all but lost my character—had fallen into the society of robbers, and been a partaker or at least a confident of their villany. Whence such sacrifices ?—from love to a faithless woman, unworthy of such a noble elevated feeling ! Now, thought I, it is time to become a man, and to prove that the noble blood of the Meeloslavskys runs in my veins. I will begin to extinguish my passions, and my first flame, my love to Groonya.

I considered well, and on this occasion followed the dictates of my reason, because Groonya was not beside me. I will not answer for what might have happened had she been beside me—had Groonya, during my struggle with my passions, appeared in all the splendour of her beauty, with her enchanting eloquence, with her tender caresses. But fortunately Groonya was at a distance, and I triumphed over myself. After weeping, raging, fretting, abusing the world, people in general, and women in particular, to tell the truth, without any cause upon this occasion, I went up to the Nádzeeratl, and striking my hand upon his, or, properly speaking, upon his greasy glove, I said : “ I thank you for your good advice—henceforth I am another man.”

Not being able myself to eat, I was amused with the appetite of the worthy Nádzeeratl. For my diversion, I begged him to tell me in what way he had fallen into the police—for what cause he had served so long with-

out promotion, and by what means his conscience, swimming upon such a stormy sea, had escaped shipwreck?" Arkheep Arkheepetch took a draught of wine, hemmed, coughed, arranged his stock and began his narrative:—"Say what you will, but it is my firm belief that a man cannot avoid what is decreed at his birth. My father was the house-steward of a noble lady, Lukeria Semenovna Poredkeen, and, for his faithful services, received his freedom along with all his family. My father had two sons—we lost our mother during our infancy. There was no one to look after us, and we did as we liked. My greatest pleasure during my childhood consisted in playing tricks to the policemen: I threw stones at them from holes and corners, caught them by the leg in a loop when they passed our gate in the evening, threw water upon them and the like. My hatred towards them was occasioned by their having arrested my father one day, and on his daring to complain, beating him and taking his money from him, and all for another man's fault. For my childish revenge I have to atone by a life-long course of policely drudgery, and it is likely to be my fate to die at last of hunger in a *syezshee drôr*.*

"My father hired a deacon to teach us reading and writing: but, as the deacon himself knew but little, he could not teach us a great deal: besides, every one has his talent, and mine did not chance to be for let-

* The name of the house belonging to the police in each ward, consisting of dwelling apartments, a lock-up-room, police office, work-house, and watch-tower—inhabited by policemen, firemen, a doctor, midwife, &c. &c.

ters. To read and write I know : I can make a shift to tell my story—at least there are people who hear me with satisfaction—but when it comes to set it down upon paper, I am puzzled. I knock about like a fish amongst ice : no, it will not come out of my pen ! It is no great harm that I am at variance with dots and dashes, strokes and hair-strokes ; our men of business themselves are no great wizards in that respect ; but my chief vexation is that I cannot write as I think, or as I speak. If one could write with the tongue in place of the pen, it is probable that we should have more writers and also more geniuses.

“ I did not wish to remain in our lady’s service, and did not know what to do with myself after the death of my father, who was an honest, God-fearing man, and did not leave us a kopeek, though he managed his mistress’s house for thirty years. My oldest brother entered the service as a clerk in the *Grazhdanskaya Palata* (civil court) and soon pushed his way so well, that he passed for a clever fellow. I procured for myself a small situation in the city-provision-magazine, under the patronage of the mayor, who knew my late father. In this place I had scarcely my daily bread. Fortunately the oldest son of our former lady, who had served in the army, was appointed police-master of Moscow. I paid my respects to him, told him of my unfortunate condition, and begged his patronage—he enrolled me in his chancery, and employed me on particular commissions.

“ *Sergius Semenoveetch Poredkeen* was an honest, truth-loving man, a wisher and doer of good where-

ever he had it in his power ; he even sought for opportunities to promote the happiness of his fellow-creatures. But, though a man had seven spans to his forehead, though he had a heart as good as ever beat, and as big as a watch-box, he could do nothing without efficient instruments, and would be so crossed by his understrappers in all his endeavours, that he would worry himself to death, as was the case with the worthy Sergey Semenovetch. “ Arkheepeetch,” said my commander to me, “ I am persuaded that thou art an honest man. Look about thee, and discover as far as possible all irregularities, and thy prayer shall not be lost on God, nor thy service on the Tzar. Recollect that the calling of police-officer, of preserver of the peace and public safety, is a respectable calling, if those who exercise it act according to law and conscience. Fear no one—I am thy protection !”

“ I soon became thoroughly acquainted with police-business and began to act. I discovered that Sergey Semenovetch’s secretary took bribes from the officers, from the farmers of the revenue, from the merchants, as if they were for his master. We surprised the secretary in the night-time, examined his *commodes*, found money, receipts from the Deposit-Bank, and his correspondence with various individuals. He was examined, and as he could neither shew nor prove how he had come by so much money in so short a time, his effects were handed over to the commissioners of public inspection, and the secretary himself dismissed the service. I discovered that one officer was in the practice of making intentional delays in executions

for debt, and in confiscations of property decreed by courts of law, that he was in the habit of beating the porters of those houses, the landlords of which gave him no gratuity, that he took money from shopkeepers, publicans, and butchers, for permission to deal in spoiled wares and provisions. The officer was discarded. I discovered that in one place thieves were allowed to live, and only some of them delivered to justice when any affair became too flagrant, and when it was necessary to make a show of activity in searching for goods stolen from people of note. The officer was put upon his trial, the thieves were caught and sent to Siberia. I procured evidence that soldiers were admitted into drinking-shops, and only those publicans brought before the police, against whom the gaugers of the *rodky-farmers* had a personal grudge. The abuse was corrected, and the guilty punished. I found out the harbourers of thieves, the receivers of stolen goods, the new-face-makers to stolen goods; discovered the connections of thieves at large with those in prison, and by those means cut off what was a rich source of revenue to many. At last I resolved on a desperate venture. The worthy Sergey Semenovetch was not free from human weaknesses. He had a female friend unworthy of his noble heart. She took money from petitioners, and during moments of weakness, drew from my worthy commander his consent to her requests, of course always representing such matters in the most favourable light. I collected undoubted evidence of the falseness and selfishness of this cunning woman, and

laid them before Sergey Semenovetch. Poor man ! He even wept—but conquered his passion and cast off the worthless barterer of his good name. In three years he promoted me to the rank of Titular Counsellor, gave me this cross, and made me overseer of the very best ward in the city.

“ You may easily guess that I was looked upon by one and all as a scare-crow, and that they would have given any thing to get rid of me. They attempted by different means to work my ruin, but as long as Sergey Semenovetch was alive, all their endeavours were fruitless. I made honesty the rule of my conduct, took no advantages ; and, as my salary was insufficient for my maintenance, as I had to keep horses, and had to be always neatly dressed, Sergey Semenovetch allowed me to avail myself of the voluntary offerings of grateful people, when I discovered stolen property, made an execution for debt, or found out concealed property of a debtor : and, besides, he gave me for my own use confiscated contraband goods, fines for carelessness, and the like. Sergey Semenovetch, as I have already told you, could not long maintain the struggle with abuses. The ardour of his disposition, the want of rest, the labour and annoyance broke up his constitution. He died, and with him was buried my good fortune.

“ His successor was also a well-meaning man, but he had his own favourites, whose advantage consisted in my ruin. He did not know me, but lent an ear to my enemies. Means were taken to undermine me. A whole gang of thieves was let loose

upon my ward, dead bodies were thrown into it, which had been found in other places ; they loaded me with false accusations, set a correspondence on foot, and entangled me with quibbles and chicaneries. It ended with taking my ward from me, and giving me for Christ's sake the place of Kvartálny Nadzeeratl, on condition that I should see no farther than my nose, should stop my ears, and, shortening my tongue, should keep it within my teeth. In this way I have lived fifteen years, from day to day, and from hand to mouth, fed by the kindness of good people, and hardly possessing the means to cover my nakedness, at a time when but yesterday the wife of our Tchastnee Preestaf, who three years ago could not afford to buy snuff, was wearing brilliants worth twelve thousand roubles, and a cashmere shawl which cost two thousand five hundred. ‘ Have patience, Cossack, you will be Hetman yet !’*

“ During this time my brother has become a great and rich man : he holds the first situation under a distinguished functionary in Petersburg, and manages all his affairs. I wrote him, begging him to allow me to come to him to Petersburg, and to procure me some small post by the influence of his commander. He answered me in a letter which I always carry in my pocket-book, having nothing else to put into it, and the letter itself being really amusing—Here it is.”

Arkheep Arkheepetch took the letter out of his faded pocket-book, and gave it me to read. It ran as

* A Russian proverb and popular song.

follows :—" Dear Brother ! Thou wishest to come to me to Petersburg, and to put up at my house. That is impossible. I have so much ado with my large family, and in the distinguished circle of my acquaintances, that I cannot spare thee a kopeek. It is true my quarters are found me by government, and, to outward appearance, seem pretty extensive, but they are so distributed, that I have not a single corner for thee, my dear brother. One room is my cabinet, another my wife's cabinet, the third my bedroom, the fourth my parlour, in the fifth my daughters sleep, in the sixth my two sons, the seventh is my daughter's teaching-room, the eighth my sons' teaching-room, the ninth my saloon, the tenth my dining-room, in the eleventh lives our French governess, in the twelfth our French governor, in the thirteenth the chambermaids, in the fourteenth my two clerks, in the fifteenth my footmen, the sixteenth is my wardrobe, the seventeenth is occupied for the folding up of papers, the eighteenth a small private room for speaking with petitioners alone. Down stairs is the servants' room, the coachmen's room, the pantries, the store-rooms ; in a word, there is not an empty place sufficient to stow a cat, much less thee, my dear brother. At table, every day, there are eight of us belonging to the house ; besides that, my secretary, the officer upon duty, two young gentlemen entrusted to my care to be introduced into society, and in addition to this I must every day have three or four vacant covers to be in readiness in case any strangers should drop in. The times are now expensive, in-

comes are low, and although it would give me pleasure to divide with thee my last crumb, my circumstances will not afford it, my dear brother ! My children are educated in the modern fashion, they speak a variety of languages, are acquainted with people of rank and wealth, and you may easily guess that the appearance of a poor uncle, a retired police-officer, would not be very agreeable to them, and might even hurt them in the common estimation, my dear brother ! With regard to a place, which thou wishest me to procure thee by means of my patron and benefactor, I will tell thee candidly, my dear brother, that I cannot be of any service to thee in that respect. My benefactor does not like to be asked for any thing, still less can he bear to be asked for any one. He distributes his favours by the drop, and so I must keep all I can for myself and children, as a good father of a family, and a man of right principles. Remain in Moscow, my dear brother, and put all thy trust in God, whom I shall never cease to entreat to preserve thee in his holy keeping, and to confer upon thee all manner of earthly blessings.

“ Thy sincere well-wisher,

“ And tenderly-loving brother,

“ PANTELEIMON.”

“ P.S.—Do not trouble thyself with writing me, my dear brother ! Postage is dear now-a-days, and I am so full of business that I cannot always answer thee. Of thy valuable health I shall inform myself by people coming from Moscow. Our common friends blame thee for letting slip the opportunity which thou hadst

for acquiring a competency, and besides this they say thou hast made thyself many enemies : this may be prejudicial to me, if they learn that I take thy part. So I beg thee, dear brother, tell no one that we are brothers ; but, if thou art asked, say that we are merely of the same surname. I am persuaded that, for the love which thou bearest to me, thou wilt do me this favour, till an opportunity occurs by which I can be of service to thee."

" A worthy brother !" exclaimed I, returning the letter to Arkheepetch who replaced it in his pocket-book with a smile, and prepared to leave me. I went to my cabinet, and taking out of my bureau a hundred roubles, returned into the room, and begged him to accept of it as from a friend. He refused, in the following words :—" If I had not come to you upon business, I would have taken the money, but now I cannot. It is not according to the fitness of things, and your present would have the appearance of a bribe." I pressed the worthy Arkheepetch to my heart, and congratulated him with the assurance that his honesty one time or other would meet its reward. Arkheepetch pointed upwards with his fore-finger, and said, " There is my hope !" He wiped off the tears with his hand, and left the room.

CHAPTER X.

Lesson in the Science of Matrimony.—Ditto in Lawyers' Arithmetic.—A rich Farmer of the Excise.—A Merchant's Feast.—His Family.—Private Theatricals.

ON visiting my mother in the nunnery, I was quite astonished to perceive that she knew of what had been passing in Groonya's house—of my intimacy with her, and even of my own behaviour. With tears she entreated me to be more careful in my connexions, and to choose for my maintenance some line of life not so dangerous as a partnership with gamblers. I promised to reform, and promised sincerely. Unable to repress my curiosity, I asked her how in her secluded state she could come to hear of my conduct and of my connexion with Groonya? “News fly through the air like a cloud, my dear Vanya,” said my mother: “our elders are in the practice of visiting pious women who live in the town; we have also visitors here; thus it happens that the news of the town find ways and means to scale the nunnery-walls.” I was quite stunned to hear that the rumour of Groonya's proceedings, in which my name was mentioned, had become a subject of town-talk. With uneasy feelings I left my mother, and drove to the house of a grandee retired from service, whose son then held a high situation in Petersburg, and, on that account, the whole of Moscow paid their

court to him. With fear and trembling, I entered the saloon. The company assembled looked towards me with inquisitive eyes, whispered amongst themselves, and seemed to be astonished at my appearance. One of my friends took me aside and asked what had happened, and if it was true that I had fallen into a disagreeable scrape, in consequence of my connexion with the runaway actress? I answered in a decided tone, that I knew absolutely nothing about the affair, that I had been the whole week at Gloopáshkeen's, and on my return to town heard by-the-by that there had been a squabble among gamblers at Preemankeen's, and that she had by stealth quitted Moscow. I intentionally raised my voice, and soon had a crowd about me, amongst whom, with an artificial smile, I related the proceeding in Groonya's house, enlivening the description with puns, and representing the affair in a laughable point of view. It was soon spread through the whole assembly that I was not in the least implicated, and all doubts with regard to me were removed. The ladies pronounced me innocent, and the youths even regretted that they had suspected me of being intimately connected with Groonya. Cousin Aneta alone did not put faith in my justification, and finding an opportunity to speak with me privately, said, in a friendly tone :—" Dear Vejeeghen ! I know all, and would forgive you all, but for God's sake be careful and do not entangle yourself with actresses. With your person and with your accomplishments, you may cut a figure in the highest circles. Do not degrade yourself. The ladies have done all for you which you could wish :

they forgive you for all, except for intriguing out of the pale of *ton*. Recollect this, and amend your ways!"

I began now to consider how I was to maintain myself in the world, by honest means. Having never engaged in business, and being only nominally in the service, I had no hope of being soon able to support myself by written labour. Besides, in my rank, it was out of the question to expect a large salary, and to bribes I had an insuperable aversion. There still remained in my possession some thousand roubles, and a few valuables. I began to live very modestly, dismissed all my servants, sold my rich furniture and my carriage, hired a small lodging, retained in my service Petroff alone, and never was at home to my friends who came for the purpose of drawing me into the whirlpool of amusements and expenses. I dined out every day, played for small stakes, danced every evening, acted the amiable, and passed the time, but could never contrive what to do with myself.

At this time one of my friends, a ruined nobleman, married the *clerée* of a rich man. This event excited in my mind a thought to mend, or, properly speaking, to make my fortune by marrying. But where to seek for a bride? There was the rub. With all my self-esteem I could not dare to look for a partner in any of those families among which birth and connexions are the current measures of value for a bridegroom. Rich *clerées* are very scarce—wealthy widows, a little advanced in years, in the second place, find husbands principally from calculations of ambition. New nobility seeks alliances with ancient families, and *vice versa*.

Upon the whole, I thought it most advisable to make my market in the mercantile line ; but having no acquaintances in that calling, I did not know how to set about it. One day, returning home, contrary to my usual practice, at six o'clock in the evening, I met at the door an old woman dressed very decently in a jacket, with a silk handkerchief about her head.—“Whom do you want, goody?” “Your man Petroff, my good master—I am his gossip.” “And what art thou?” asked I, from curiosity. “A midwife, my son, and, if need be, a *srákha*.”* “Very well ! Go in, goody, to Petroff, and after that I want to speak a word with thee.”

In half an hour I ordered the old woman to come into my cabinet. “What sort of people dost thou bring together?” “Whoever pleases, sir ; merchants, officers, and also gentry.” “Dost thou know of any rich brides at present?” “To be sure I do ! We have plenty of wares, had we only purchasers.” “‘The proof of the pudding’s in the eating of it,’ but there is no harm in asking: if thou findest me a rich *kooptcheékha*,* I will fill thy lap with gold, my old woman.” “At your service, sir, master ; I have in my hands just now a brace of *kooptcheékhass* ; and how pretty, how dashing, how learned they are ! They speak in all the German lingos, dance all manner of outlandish jigs, dress like dolls !” — — — “Good, very good—but what portion have they?” asked I the talkative old

* A matrimonial broker.

† The females belonging to a merchant’s family are known by the general term of ‘*kooptcheekha*.’

woman. "A hundred thousand a piece, ready money ; and fifty thousand in effects, silver, gold, pearls, coloured stones, and all sorts of finery." "Incomparable ! How do they call these respectable young ladies, and their honourable parents ?" "The father, Pamphel Merkooloveetch Moshmeen, was born in our part of the country, and is enrolled among the burgeses of Moscow. The mother, Matrena Evdokeemovna, an excellent housewife, God bless her—she has eight children—two sons, already tall striplings, and three little boys ; three daughters, two of them marriageable, and the third a girl of fifteen." "What are the daughters' names ?" "The oldest Aquilina Pamphelovna, the second Vaseleesa Pamphelovna, and the youngest Lukeria Pamphelovna." "Which of them is the prettiest ?" "The fullest and rosiest of all is Aquilina Pamphelovna ; Vaseleesa is a little inferior ; and the third is a thin creature, but she is only a girl yet." "How am I to break the ice ?" "I will speak about thee to the misses, whisper in Matrena Evdokeemovna's ear, cry thee up to the aunts ; and thou, master, must scrape an acquaintance with Pamphel Merkooloveetch : he is a good-hearted man, and likes all sorts of fun. A power of gentry assembles at his house ; and he has a deal of business in government-contracts." "Very well, here are ten roubles to thee for the first good word in my behalf—go, with God to speed thee, and hasten back with welcome tidings—good bye !"

When the *svakha* went away, I without joke set about considering how I should concoct this match. A hundred thousand, ready money, and a connexion

with a rich government-contractor, I reckoned the greatest attainable happiness in my existing condition. One difficulty stood in my way : how to introduce myself into the house ? In the circle of my friends I did not expect to find a guide to Moshneen's house, and, besides that, I wished to avoid revealing to them my intentions. I recollected, however, that I had seen frequently at Groonya's, at the card-table, a secretary on whom at that time we cracked our jokes, saying, that the inky spots were visible on his money. One day, being *croupier*, I observed that he bent an extra corner, and not choosing to bring him into an unpleasant scrape, I kept silence, and, after the game was over, made him sensible of it. The secretary promised to serve me on the first opportunity, and so I resolved to drive to his house, and learn how I might get myself introduced to Moshneen, who was doubtless known by all the legal fraternity.

My Petroff knew his lodgings, so I immediately set off thither. He lived in a small, neat, wooden house, in a distant part of the town. I intentionally hired a coach and four. My vehicle had scarcely stopped at the door, when I immediately perceived a movement in the house : a footman opened the folding doors with a bow, and conducted me into a saloon, where I was met by the secretary, dressed in a stuff surtout, red boots, and a coloured handkerchief about his neck. Out of respect he took off his nightcap and spectacles, and begged me to enter his cabinet, a shabby-looking hole, in which there were neither books, nor papers, nor writing materials. " How can I serve you ? " said the

secretary, in a patronizing but at the same time a respectful tone. "Don't trouble yourself," replied I—I have no earthly business—but only wish to know if you are not acquainted with Pampheel Merkooloveetch Moshneen, or with any of his intimate friends?" "And what is the nature of your business, may I make free to ask?" said the secretary. "I have commercial views." "I understand," said the secretary, with a knowing smile—"right, left!" "You are mistaken: since the time that I succeeded to my fortune, I have entirely abjured play," said I, wiping my face with my handkerchief, to prevent the wily secretary from reading in my face the falsehood of what I told with my tongue. "Ah, you have come to a great fortune, and don't play more? That is right, that is quite right. But for myself, like a d——d fool, I cannot curb that infernal passion! With Moshneen I am hand and glove: I have a small affair of his at present before me: he promised to call to-day, for a private consultation, and I will introduce you without more ado. But do me the kindness to wait here a little, till I speak to a petitioner whom you did not observe in the corner of the parlour. To keep you from wearying, I will give you an excellent book to look at—the works of 'Theodore Amen.'" The secretary took the book out of a side-room, and, at the same time, a bundle of papers, with which he proceeded to the petitioner.

They spoke rather low—but, as far as I could make it out, the secretary stated different objections to the petitioner, to which he replied in rather a soft tone.

At last they grew angry, quarrelled, softened down again, and I only overheard ‘*one—two—three*,’ and, at last, ‘*forty*’ : in a minute the counting began afresh, from unity to forty, with which the process terminated. “Your cause is perfectly right !” said the secretary—“You may go home now, and put your mind at ease !” The petitioner made his bow, and the secretary came back to me. We conversed for a quarter of an hour on the unfortunate proceeding at Groonya’s, of her flight, &c. when, on a sudden, the servant came into the room, and announced that another petitioner had arrived. The secretary went to him, and the same comedy was acted over again. At first the objections, after that the dispute, the convincing, the begging—lastly, an arithmetical series of forty, thrice told, and after that the dismissing compliment of the secretary : “Put your mind at ease—your cause is perfectly right.” When the secretary came back to me, I could not help asking who that second petitioner was who seemed to be in such a passion ? “That is the opponent of the other man whom you saw here !” replied the secretary. “Fortunate adversaries !” said I, with a smile, “who are both in the right !” “And so you heard ?”—“Yes, I only heard your assurance of the justice of each of their causes.” “That is merely a common form of judicial compliment,” said the secretary ; “but who is actually right and who is wrong, we will see, after the words *heard* and *ordered*.” At this time a calash drove up to the door. “Here is our respected Pampheel Merkooloveetch !” exclaimed the secretary, and ran to meet him.

I was rather disconcerted, not knowing how to commence this acquaintance, and how to behave myself towards the rich farmer. If I put on high airs, I was afraid that he would keep at a distance ; if on the contrary I behaved unassumingly, I feared that I would lower myself in the eyes of a man who probably would not trouble himself to discover my inward worth. Like a general, who on the field of battle displays his active powers, but in the cabinet feels his irresolution and short-sightedness, I waited the appearance of Moshneen, to form my plan of attack and commence active operations. He remained alone with the secretary for about half an hour, and at last the secretary called me into the saloon. I saw before me a tall, plain old man with a long hoary beard, fresh rosy cheeks, smooth and shining, wearing a long blue surtout, and in the *tout ensemble* of his dress uniting the old Russian and modern German fashions. He smiled very kindly, and made a few half-bows before the secretary introduced me. “ I recommend my worthy friend, Mr. Vejeeghen,” said the Secretary ; “ a man who is wealthy, wise, and well-connected : he wishes to become acquainted with you, Pampheel Merkooloveetch, knowing that you keep agreeable company.” “ Very glad, Sir !” replied Moshneen, continuing his half-bows ; “ We are liked and favoured by many persons of rank, and are glad to do our best.” I cannot recollect what I muttered forth to him concerning his celebrity, honourable dealing, *savoir vivre*, &c. only Moshneen was very well pleased with me. “ I say, can’t you do me the favour of being with me to-morrow, without

ceremony, along with Anteeep Treephónoveetch ?” said Moshneen, pointing to the secretary. “ To-morrow is my oldest daughter’s name’s-day. Do have the kindness to come and take potluck with us.” I thanked him for the invitation, and Moshneen took his leave, moving backwards towards the door, repeating his half-bows, and saying over and over again, “ *We wish you good bye: thank you kindly; don’t trouble,*”--and the like. After he had gone, says the secretary, “ Here is an acquaintance for you ! You see that I have found an opportunity to do you a good turn for your discreteness at Agraphéna Stepanovna’s.” “ I promise you to be still more discreet on the subject of your arithmetic with petitioners !” said I, with a smile. “ That gives me no concern,” replied the secretary, cheerfully ; “ ‘ For what is the pike in the lake, but to keep the small fish awake !’* Every body knows that we live by our labours.”— “ But the notoriety !” - - - “ Notoriety !” repeated the secretary ; “ that is a devilish deal more serviceable, than for the public to be in ignorance or doubt of the motives which guide us. A petitioner knows at least what spring to touch, and that is a great relief. Let them cry out, speak, sing, and make farces about it ! I never miss going to the performance of ‘ *Yábeda, the honest lawyer,*’ and always prick up my ears and cock my eye when the actor who represents the lawyer, bending himself like a bow no more elastic, sings,

“ Ah, what a time is this—

Bribes we no more may take !”

* Russian proverb.

“ That, Sir, is a bauble, a child’s play, but things take their own course for all that.”

After joining in the laugh along with the secretary, I left him, previously appointing to go together next day to dine at Moshneen’s. I asked him whether it would not be necessary to make a call, in the first place ; or whether, after the billeting fashion, I should march straight up to the table without asking any questions. “ Among merchants no attention is paid to that,” said the secretary : “ their families are accustomed to see strange faces, and people there come and go as they are wanted, or follow in the regular train of business. Among them, acquaintance begins with a dinner, and generally ends when a man who is of no more use to them, asks the loan of money.” “ I am obliged to you for the information : farewell till to-morrow !”

Next day I sat at home all morning, thinking upon the past and the future, and found myself in a strange condition of mind ; I reviewed, one by one, and criticised all the steps which I had taken. In the first place, I condemned myself for making use of unfair means to acquire money ; in the second place, for the inconsiderateness with which I had squandered what I had acquired. I resolved to lead a quiet life ; on marrying a *kooptchéekha*, to enter into business for the purpose of increasing my capital, and to become a decent man. As I would keep aloof from the great world and from my fashionable acquaintances, I thought that I would be able to avoid all superfluous expenses and indulgences which are pardonable, and sometimes ne-

cessary to people of the higher ranks, but are ridiculous in merchants. My wife, born and bred among people of simple tastes, would doubtless have no conception of those refined cravings of a pampered nature which arise within the higher circles, to torment before their time the possessors of wealth and rank. A quiet life, the management of the house, the education of her children, and innocent pleasures, are the obvious lot of the woman who has no extensive acquaintance. I resolved to give up all thoughts of ambition, to keep free from intrigue, and to become a man of business. There is no doubt but the condition of an honest merchant whose desires are moderate, is very enviable. The affair is decided : I will be a merchant, I will give up all my unprofitable connexions in the great world : if necessary, I will even remove to take up my residence in another town, for instance in Astrakhan and — — but I must first get married, and take up my hundred thousand.

Engaged in thinking and castle-building, I did not perceive how the time slipped away. In the midst of this I was interrupted by the clock, which warned me that it was time to dress. Arraying myself in the most foppish style, I went to the place appointed for meeting with the secretary, and from thence straight to Moshneen's house.

Up to the moment at which I am writing, I cannot conceive what pleasure the master of a house can have in inviting to dinner people who differ as far as east from west, in their education, worldly circumstances, habits of life, and casts of thought ! In the first place,

he heaps up for himself a mass of trouble, and frequently of dissatisfaction ; and, in the second place, he confers a disagreeable favour upon his guests. The landlord must screw his features into a different pitch towards each of them, and the guest for his part, does not know what tone to assume, nor with what degree of communicativeness to carry on the conversation. All this I experienced that day, at Moshneen's. I had scarcely entered the saloon, when I might fancy myself at the Makárieff fair. Officers civil and military, merchants of all nations, in different costumes, of all degrees from the highest guild down to the lowest broker ; females, some in the tiptop of Parisian fashion, others in blond and lace-caps, others with silk handkerchiefs about their heads, some in jackets ; in a word, a confusion of tongues, a real *divertissement* ! I ran my eye over a crowd of guests whispering and bawling about the weather, and fortunately did not see one face which I knew : this gave me courage : I confess, I was afraid of meeting with some of my old card-table acquaintances. The secretary asked a footman where the landlord and landlady were : we were taken into a huge dining-room. There Pamphel Merkooloveetch, with his better half, was hard at work, the sweat upon his brow. Footmen were taking wine out of baskets, the butler was giving his verdict upon the quality of each, the landlord was separating the one from the other, disposing the best wines in the places of honour, while the home-made madeira and port were put to the other end of the table for the use of the more common guests. The landlady, a healthy-

looking fat woman, of about fifty years of age, dressed in the German fashion, with a silk *kosseenka** about her head, was arranging the dessert. They apologised to me for being found in the midst of household labours, and begged me to be without ceremony as if I were at home. We returned to the company, and I begged the secretary to introduce me to the landlord's children. The two sons of Moshneen, dressed in the latest fashion, complimented me in French phrases, and endeavoured to shew themselves clever, and to sport an easy freedom : in a word, to act the part of people of *haut ton*. It was evident that they copied all the gestures of the young dandies of the great world, not as they are exhibited in drawing-rooms, but in the theatres, on the boulevards, at the public promenades, and the *corps de gardes* ; owing to this, their demeanour at first sight appeared too familiar and even impudent. They had already left the mercantile denomination, and entered the career of the civil service, that is to say, the shopmen, clerks, and footmen, styled them, 'your honour.' I endeavoured, from our first interview, to conciliate their good graces, by accommodating myself to their ideas, and begged them, '*as is usual in the great world,*' to present me to their sisters. The word, '*great world,*' tickled their vanity, and taking me by the arm, they led me into the drawing-room, where there was a large as-

* Russian head-dress, worn by the wives of Russian merchants, and the lower ranks of females who are not peasants : it is composed of the half square of a silk handkerchief, tied on the crown of the head, like a night-cap.

sembly of young ladies, gaudily dressed. Some of them were seated on chairs and on a sofa, others were whispering to each other beside the windows, and some were walking up and down the room. The brothers led me up to their sisters, who fortunately happened to be all in the same place, and introduced me, muttering some words in French. The two oldest were arrayed in the latest, and at the same time the showiest fashion ; the youngest was plainly dressed. They made me a curtsey in exact conformity to the rules of the dancing-school, and the oldest sister in the name of the rest answered me in French : “ *Charmée de faire votre connaissance !* ” If fatness and whiteness are to be taken as the standards for beauty, as in the east, and particularly in China, the oldest Miss Moshneen might have passed for the greatest beauty in Peking, and the second for the next : only it is a pity that the Chinese have such a predilection for small feet : with us in the north that is very uncommon, and was none of the peculiarities of the two oldest Misses Moshneen. But the youngest was charming, in every sense of the word. From the colour on the face of the oldest sister, and a certain involuntary agitation, I conjectured that the wily *svakha* had already broken the ice with her. It was observable at the same time that all the guests peeped at me through their eyelashes, and then stared in each others faces, and whispered together. Considering it improper to continue the conversation with one young lady in the midst of a circle of silent observers, I made my bow, and withdrew with my new friends into the other room.

We were forthwith summoned to dinner, and I was seated between the two young gentlemen, of course at the respectable end of the table. Any sort of general conversation was out of the question during dinner. Officers talked together about promotions and new evolutions; civilians, about new ukazes and changes in the ministry and public offices; dabblers in law, about crimes and punishments; merchants, about the course of exchange, fresh bankruptcies, and the prices of the day. Some of the mercantile youth, and among the rest the young Moshmeens, displayed their knowledge of horses, fashionable surtouts and vests, the theatre, female singers and dancers. However, amidst all this, none of the guests neglected the more serious part of the business: empty bottles were continually being changed for full ones, by a signal from the landlord, who, sitting at the end of the table, like a Jupiter, by the mere play of his eyebrows, put in motion the whole popular system. The voices of the ladies were not audible, except in giving brief answers to questions put now and then by gentlemen. My neighbours emptied bottles without ceasing, ordered the servants to hand us the best wine, and by the time that the toasts began, the whole company was already *ree*.* Half-tipsey footmen ran here and there with bottles, as if they were distracted, spilling the wine upon the guests, and making a prodigious fuss. The drinking

* Gaiety and delirium are both implied in this Scotch term, the introduction of which the English reader will have the kindness to pardon, as it expresses exactly the sense of the Russian phrase, ‘*na veselye*.’

of healths was commenced. In the first place the young lady's, whose name's-day they were assembled to celebrate ; after that, the health of the parents, children, relations, respectable guests individually, the whole company, &c. The fair sex in the meantime were quietly occupied with the dessert. The young ladies pecked the berries like as many little birds, and though they were already crammed to repletion, they continued to swallow fruits and confections, in small mouthfuls, with every appearance of satisfaction. Although quite disposed for merriment, I could not join in that of the young Moshneens, at the expense of their parents. At every awkwardness of papa and mamma, the dear little children laughed, concealing their faces with their table-napkins, and winking across the table to their oldest sisters. The sons called their father the scoopish old clerk, and their mother the counter, and even cracked their jokes aloud in French. The worthy parents, who did not understand a word of what they said, seemed quite pleased to hear their children speaking a foreign language. I was drawn, in spite of myself, to reflect upon the worthlessness of that system of education, which, exclusively cultivating outward shew, and leaving moral principle out of sight, makes us look down upon the condition in which we were born, and, by implanting false notions of self-importance, stifles in the heart the feelings of nature.

After dinner some of the guests sat down to boston and whist, the ladies amused themselves with tittle-tattle and sweetmeats, while the youth, including myself,

removed their sitting to the apartments of the young Moshneens, where they smoked tobacco, drank Champagne, and talked upon subjects which it would not be proper to mention here. In an hour and a half the elder brother requested his guests to return into the gala-rooms, informing them that there would be a performance of a French comedy, for a surprise to their *papakin* and *mammakin* (so he called his father and mother.) Chairs were placed in the dining-room : in the *buffet* were assembled the domestic performers, that is to say, the Moshneen family, and some friends of the young ladies. At the end of the room were fixed moveable side-scenes, and a curtain of carpets stitched together was hung up. In place of an orchestra, the youngest daughter's music-master played wretchedly enough upon the piano-forte. When all the guests were seated, according to their ranks, Mr. and Mrs. Moshneen took their places in the first row of arm-chairs, seating between them the French governor of the younger children, to translate what was to be said, and explain every thing which should occur. The same governor, Monsieur Furet, was the author of the drama about to be performed, under the title of '*The liberal Parents, or the good Children.*' Although the title of itself was quite enough, nevertheless there was no want of applause, but the clapping of hands was repeated at every word, or at least at every couplet. The substance of the piece was as follows :—A rich merchant spares no expense in the education and outfit of his children ; allows his sons money for treating their friends, for equipages, &c. ; extends the same

munificence to his daughters for dresses ; and, besides that, takes them to all the promenades, theatres, and masquerades, and give balls and fêtes at home. In the last act, his daughters are married to princes, counts, and generals ; while his sons attain the highest ranks in the service. The sons and sons-in-law, out of gratitude, join together in procuring a title of nobility for their father, who is at last complimented with the style of ‘ *Right honourable*.’ It was a sight worth seeing to behold the extacy of the worthy couple during the performance of the piece. The governor translated faithfully every phrase and every couplet which reflected honour on the parents, and tears of tenderness ran in torrents down their cheeks. Notwithstanding that the two oldest sons, heated with wine, bungled in the acting, that the two oldest daughters knew nothing at all of the parts which they had to perform, and that the voice of the prompter drowned the speeches of the actors, who, besides that, sang quite out of tune, the performance went through gloriously, and attained the object in view, that is to say, it convinced Moshneen that children should not be grudged money to supply their extravagance, as it all tends to the elevation of the family. The performance was concluded with dancing—the misses Moshneen danced a fandango, the tambouréen, and shawl-dance, while the younger sons skipped like monkeys. The china cups and saucers, and chandeliers, shook and jingled in sweet accordance with the light fantastic movements of the two elder sisters, but the youngest enchanted all with her playing, dancing, singing, and still more by

her beauty and modesty. I was in truth deeply smitten with her. But knowing that in merchants' houses the daughters must go off according to their age, I saw no hope of receiving her hand, unless it might be by the forcible intervention of her brothers. That day I succeeded in forming a very close friendship with them, and, on my going away, invited them to breakfast with me next morning.

CHAPTER XI.

My matrimonial scheme miscarries—One Letter from the Kirg-heezian steppe, and another from Paris.—I join the army.—War.—Distinction.—Return to Moscow.

It would be tedious to describe all that I went through in order to ingratiate myself with the young Moshneens. In their company continually for some months, and wishing to accommodate myself to their manner of life, the improvement which I underwent was little better than the transition out of the frying-pan into the fire. The greatest pleasure of rich merchants' sons who did not follow their father's profession, consisted in making excursions to taverns out of town, where they indulged without reserve in drinking, rioting, and debauchery, broke windows, and bottles, and glasses, quarrelled with clerks belonging to public offices, and with poor German artizans—and, to conclude the scene, kicked up rows, and made their peace with the police-officers. The Moshneens treated me like a friend and a brother, and made me the confidant of all their secrets. I learned in what manner they took up debt on their father's account—how they imposed upon their mother, and got money from her under pretence of making presents to their superior officers in the service ; how they purloined the contents of the *commode*, by means of a false key, when there happened

to be a quantity of money in it, and the like. At last I disclosed to them my love for their youngest sister, and they engaged to forward the object of my wishes. The simple girl agreed to take me for her husband, and entered with eagerness into a correspondence through the medium of her brothers. Pamphel Merkooloveetch and his full-weighted spouse were also well inclined towards me on the strength of my nobility and fifteen hundred souls, and seemed quite desirous that I should make a good *beginning*, that is to say, should marry their oldest daughter. Only one obstacle remained to be overcome, to wit, to persuade the parents to make the matrimonial *beginning* with the third daughter ; when, on a sudden, one day, all my plans, and the accumulated hopes of many months, evaporated like smoke.

The wily secretary saw through my deceit, and rightly suspected that my fortune was all fudge. Being acquainted with a lawyer, a native of Byalo-Russia, who had been turned out of court for chicanery, the secretary learned from him, that in the whole of Byalo-Russia there was not a single noble family of the name of Vejeeghen. Over a tumbler of punch, when he was in a communicative humour, he related this to old Moshneen, and drew my picture at the same time in the darkest colours. He was joined by Ivan Merkooloveetch, one of the sufferers at Oodaveetch's entertainment, where I had been—and he took his oath that I was a gambling swindler. Old Moshneen warned his sons not to associate with me. But, although I had been actually as bad as I was described to the old

gentleman, I would still have been the best of friends with the young Moshmeens. They informed me of all, and advised me to lay before their father the proofs of my nobility, and title-deeds of my estate. Of course, nothing remained to be done but to give up visiting Moshmeen, and bid adieu to all hopes of possessing either bride or dowry. I could not help thinking that this was a righteous judgment upon me for connecting myself with gamblers, and patiently submitted to my fate. A man who is deeply affected by a loss or failure, gives himself up to despair only in cases where the flame of the ruling passion is suppressed, without being totally extinguished ; and in misfortunes where the reason and not the heart is the party concerned, it is easy to find consolation. After weighing all the advantages and disadvantages of the projected marriage, I congratulated myself that I had escaped from being connected with the young Moshmeens—gave up receiving them at my house, and soon got quite rid of them.

One day I received two letters, one from Orenburg, the other from Paris. My old medical attendant, the Baxa Temeer Boolak, wrote me from the Kirgheezyan *steppe* as follows :—

“ To the highly-respected, illustrious, brave Meerza, Ivan Vejceghen, from his faithful friend, the Baxa Temeer Boolak, compliments, wishes of health and happiness !

“ Since the time that thou quittedst our blessed *steppe*, Mahomet, sitting in the ninth heaven, has been wroth with the distinguished tribe of Baganálee Keep-tehak, and his sacred mare El Borak has whisked her

tail against the *aool*, which was prospering under the wise government of the brave Arsalan Sultan. Presages of misfortune in the heavens and on the earth obliged us to be on our guard : the moon concealed her forehead in the skirt of the sacred garment of the prophet, and her figure was as obscure as that of an antelope in the mist. Insects were found in the entrails of sheep, and Arsalan Sultan's favourite mare brought forth a dead foal with two heads. I foretold calamity, but Arsalan Sultan having imbibed the doctrines of bookish infidelity in Russia, put no faith either in my visions or my prophecies, nor would he listen to the counsels of wisdom, and unite with the great Horde to escape from the deadly feud of the two powerful tribes of Tcheezlek and Dert Kareek, whose chief had fallen by thy powerful arm, O brave Meerza, Ivan Vejeeghen ! These two tribes having called to their assistance all their allies, fell upon us unexpectedly, and did not conquer but cut off our best horsemen. The manly and hitherto invincible Sultan Arsalan, sharper than the sword of the prophet, the flower of the *steppes*, fell in the ranks of the enemy like a wolf in the midst of a flock of sheep, as a judgment for despising the wise counsels of the Mollahs, and disbelieving the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of the Baxa. Our flocks and herds became a prey to the enemy, our *aools* were plundered, our fair maidens led away into captivity ! In the general confusion, the surviving warriors saved themselves by flight, and joined the great Horde. Thy letter I received at Orenburg, at the Barter-yard, whither I had

been sent by the Khan on business of his. And so, Meerza Ivan Vejeeghen, do not expect to receive thy property, which was laid apart in the *yoort* of Arsalan Sultan himself, and fell into the hands of the spoilers along with his stores. The successor of the brave Sultan, thy friend Gayuk, is so poor that he quaffs his Koomees out of the bounty of the magnanimous Khan of the great Horde, and serves him as commander of his body-guards ! Further, the Khan has heard so much of thee, that he would be glad to see thee, and would probably give thee a respectable situation in his Horde. Fare thee well, and do not forget thy friend Temeer Boolak, who prays to God for thy prosperity, and begs him to stir up within thee a desire to return to the beauty of earthly beauties, the foretaste of Paradise—the Kirgheezyan *steppe*.”

Tears flowed from my eyes at reading the news of the worthy Arsalan Sultan’s end, and the misfortunes which had befallen my old comrades. My hope of receiving aid from the Kirgheezyan *steppe* was thus extinguished, and my condition became more perplexing.

The other letter was from Groonya. With a shaking hand I broke open the seal, and read it over and over again in the ebullition of various feelings. These were its contents : “ My friend, dear to my heart, Vejeeghen ! thou art probably well aware of the cause which obliged me to leave Moscow and Russia. I love thee so, that I chose rather not to expose thee to misfortune, by uniting my bitter lot with thine. But it is hard for a woman to exist in the world without one of the other sex to protect her, and I chose for

this purpose, Monsieur Sans-souci, a cheerful and worthy Frenchman, who loves me as ardently — as I love thee ! It was written in his passport that he travelled with his wife ; but, as Madame Adèle remained in Russia in the capacity of governess, I occupied her place and arrived safe in Paris. Ah, my dear friend, what a city is this Paris ! Our quiet, grim Moscow, in comparison with the capital of France, is as a pond in comparison with a waterfall. During winter in our country, after twilight, all is still and empty, and nothing but the rattling of carriages reminds you that you are not in the heart of a wood. But here there is perpetual life, perpetual motion ; no day, no night, but only a change of scenery ; the natural light finding an artificial substitute. I wonder how I escaped a fit of apoplexy from extacy of delight at first seeing the Parisian *magazins de modes* ! Ah, my friend, what an alluring spectacle ! Novelties here do not make their appearance after a lapse of months or weeks, but every day, every hour, every minute. Here is the sanctuary of taste, the mount Sinai of the chosen people of fashion, the central point of all inventions. Here life is not calculated by years, but by the number of gratifications, and every one bustles about like the navigator who hurries to settle his affairs on shore when the sails of his vessel are already hoisted. Paris is the head-ium of the whole world. Here are assembled the amateurs of wisdom, of pleasure, and of happiness, from all ends of the earth ; and owing to this, every one lives here according to his taste without the least constraint, the same

as he would do in a tavern. My dear friend ! if you only saw how our ladies, who in Russia will not move a step without a convoy of a couple of robust lackeys and a coach with four horses, though it were only to cross the street, walk here alone in the most crooked lanes of Paris, in the illuminated garden of the Palais Royal, under the arcades, and go to the bathing-place in a common *fiacre* ! This *incognito* furnishes them with a thousand gratifications, which, if any one should dare to mention in their presence in Russia, he would be set down for an idiot, a brute, an impertinent fellow ! Here there are offices opened for every thing : every desire has its agents. You may buy and sell even heart and mind. Not till I came here, had I any right conception of social life. Whatever may be the refinement of our upper-circles, thou must confess, my dear friend, that the middle class still retains a great deal of the Asiatic ; and that the women, though they rule the roast there, as they do every where and even in Asia itself, are in common life kept under woful restraint by old-fashioned customs. But here every one has full freedom. Decent females resort to taverns and coffee-houses, travel alone in diligences and post-chaises, and frequently have their own connections and acquaintances concerning which their husbands know nothing at all, and care as little. Every Frenchwoman is complete mistress in her own house, while the duty of the husband is confined to out-of-door business. Foreigners are here valued not according to their rank, but according to the money which they spend, and it is the purse not

the patent which here confers the title. Your humble servant among the rest has been dubbed a princess, though not at her own expense. Refinement in amusements and pleasures is here carried to its highest pitch, and human ingenuity seems to have been exhausted in the devising of comforts. Amusements may be divided into public and private. To the first class belong the theatres, concerts, public balls, promenades, and *fetes champetres*. All the entertainments which in other capitals are restricted to the principal festivals, and extraordinary occasions, are of daily occurrence here, and draw always crowds of amateurs. I shall not enter upon a description of the theatres, which form the ruling passion of the French. I shall not describe all the amusements partaken of *incognito*, and am silent for this reason, because I wish that thou shouldst come to Paris thyself and taste these pleasures in reality, not merely on paper. Up to this moment I have had no time for recollection; my head has been in a continual whirl. Monsieur Sans-souci is a very good sort of a man, and does not in the least plague me with importunate love. I have made the acquaintance of some foreign ladies, and of some of my own countrymen in quest of diversion as well as myself: we lead an extremely cheerful life. Thou hast reason, my dear friend, to be proud of my love! Even in Paris I have got the name of the beautiful Russian, and if thou only saw me in my Parisian dress, thou wouldst prostrate thyself at my feet along with a dozen of lords, German princes travelling *incognito*, and our own worthy countrymen. In our country the

milliners and dress-makers know nothing about their business, and think of nothing but of getting their rags off their hands. But here they work for fame and — money. Come my friend, only leave behind in Russia thy jealousy and thy philosophy, for which there is no room here. Ask for me in the Palais royal, in the *magazin de modes*, No. 113."

From this letter I saw that misfortune had not reformed Groonya, and that giddiness and vanity still retained their wonted sway over her. I thought it would be of no avail to write any answer, knowing that my counsels would be disregarded.

In the meantime, as war broke out with Turkey, recalling to my mind the advice of my worthy Petroff, I resolved to enter the military service. I disclosed my intention to my friend Cousin Annette, who had always treated me as a brother. She applauded my resolution, and undertook to negotiate for me the exchange from the civil into the military service. O all-powerful daughters of Eve, how many obligations do I owe to you in the course of my life! Cousin Annette put in motion all her female friends, aunts and cousins. Notes were written to and fro, visits made, consultations, petitions, recommendations. My superior officer, with whom I played at whist twice a week, and dined every Sunday, gave me a flaming certificate of zealous and faultless service, although I had never seen the inside of his chancery: accordingly, in the course of two months, I was translated into a cornet in the very same *polk* in which my deceased father had served.

When I presented myself before cousin Annette in my full hussar costume, she sighed with admiration, and declared that I was born to the uniform. My patronesses rejoiced in the success of their application, and I almost fatigued myself to death, dancing with grateful feet the mazoorka with all their daughters and nieces. Petroff was in extacy, and tormented me with begging me to hurry off to the *polk*. Worthy Cousin Annette lent me some thousand roubles, and, after scraping together the fragments of my property, I set off for Malo-Russia where the *polk* was quartered and waiting for orders to advance.

I said nothing to my mother of my intentions, but presented myself before her in my military uniform the day before my departure. She almost fainted at the sight. I was so like my father, being in the same uniform, that my mother could not bear to look upon me. After a profusion of tears, as is usual in such cases, she gave me her blessing, and loading me with good advices, wished me success. Next day I was on the high way to Kharkoff.

The *polk* had already begun to move forward, and I came up with it on the route. When I presented myself to the Colonel, he gazed at me, clasped his hands in amazement, and said: "My God, what an astonishing likeness! If I had not been an eye-witness of the death of my friend, prince Meeloslavsky, I could not help believing that I see him now before me." He called out of the adjoining apartment the quartermaster, who had been formerly serjeant-major in my father's squadron, and asked: "Who is cornet

Vejeeghen like?" "He is a living picture of the late Prince Ivan Alexandroveetch Meeloslavsky!" exclaimed the old man, the tears streaming from his eyes. "Did you ever hear of the Prince?" asked the Colonel of me. "No;" replied I. "I know that my deceased friend was a bachelor, but it frequently happens in the world that — — — that is to say, that there are strange coincidences! I wish, my dear comrade, you may be like the Prince in mind and bravery, as well as in person, and, as I have no reason to form any contrary opinion, I give you this advice at starting: endeavour to learn as soon as possible the fronting part of the service, without which the best of men will never be a good officer. We have many raw recruits, of whom I have formed an exercising squadron, and intend to drill them on the route. I appoint you to the body-squadron, and in the meantime, in order to learn the order of the service, I place you under the commander of the exercising squadron, Captain Braveen, an old soldier, whom I advise you to love and respect like a father, for he is worthy of it."

In the army there is a prejudice against those who enter from other regiments by seniority, or, as they call it, are put over their heads. Although I was ranked as the youngest cornet, my comrades received me very coldly because I had entered from the civil service. Notwithstanding my respectful behaviour, and my endeavours to acquire the good-will of the officers, I got the nickname of the lawyer, although I swore that I had never in my life written any thing but love-letters, and hated the hocking tribe more

than I did the Turks with whom we were going to fight. There was no end to their taunts, which became more frequent and offensive, when it was seen that they put me into a passion. Captain Braveen who loved me sincerely, advised me to teach them better manners. In one week I had two duels with the sabre, and one with pistols, wounded two of my antagonists, and received myself a slight wound in the left arm. The Colonel put us all under arrest, and reprimanded us by way of punishment : as soon as I recovered, I gave my comrades a *dejeuner*, not omitting to invite my antagonists, and declared before them all, that, if any of them wished to be convinced that I never had been and never would be a lawyer, I was ready to give him sabre and pistol evidence. My comrades were pleased with this frank and bold behaviour, and amid the clashing of Champagne-bottles and glasses, I was acknowledged to be a sterling hussar. "Vejeeghen," said the lieutenant who had wounded me, "thou hast washed out the ink with thy blood ; now thou art ours, and he who is against thee is against us. Give me thy hand, brother. Thou art just the lad for us."

The Colonel having called me to him, gave me a fatherly advice, saying : "I punished you as a duty which I owed to the service, but I have no reason to be dissatisfied with you for your behaviour. You were drawn into the squabble ; but now that you have entered into full communion with the old officers, avoid disputes. A good officer should shew his bravery in battle with the enemy, and not in single combat with

his friends. Captain Braveen informs me that you are sufficiently acquainted with the fronting to be able to take your place in the company. Please to present yourself to the commander of the body-squadron. I have ordered him to give you the third subdivision." I do not know if a veteran General would have been so glad on getting the command of a whole army, as I was on the present occasion. My worthy Petroff jumped for joy.

I spoke to no one of my having been in the Kirgheezian *steppe*, fearing that it might be the means of procuring me another nickname, and made no display of my abilities in horsemanship, in which I had continued to exercise myself even in Moscow, riding out of town into solitary places. I however provided myself with a hair-noose, and bought a mountain-horse in order to be ready, if an opportunity should cast up, to make a trial of my skill.

My dear readers ! If you should chance to hear the stories of cornets and ensigns concerning the plan of a campaign, military combinations, the blunders of generals, and the causes of success and miscarriage in war—listen out of civility, but believe no more than the one half, or better believe not a single syllable of what they tell you. An officer serving in front can see nothing more than what occurs before the front, and has it not in his power to judge of military plans otherwise than by hearsay, and by putting together a multiplicity of circumstances and occurrences which cannot come to his knowledge till after the campaign is over. Therefore I do not choose to enter upon military operations,

to which, besides, I am less inclined, as I have no intention to write the history of the war, but merely to represent what occurred to myself.

After crossing the Danube, our *polk* united itself to the vanguard of the main army ; and, as we had taken no part in the actions which were fought previous to the crossing of the river, we joined it with our full complement, and, as it is called, fresh.

One day I was stationed with my subdivision at an outpost on the Turkish borders. It was in the month of June, but the night was piercing cold. I lay beside a little fire, wrapped up in my cloak, and waiting till Petroff should boil the tea-kettle, when, on a sudden, a hussar galloped up from the outer chain, and informed me that he heard a noise among the bushes which bordered the field on which our dragoon-sentries were posted. I immediately ordered my men to horse, and leaving them on the spot under the command of a serjeant, I advanced with two men and my comrade Petroff who never left me, to corroborate the report of the sentinel. The night was dark, thick clouds covered the moon, and a mist hung over the valley. I dismounted, put my ear to the ground, and actually heard a whispering and slight rustling among the bushes. Can that be the enemy ? How is it possible to know in the dark ? Before I occupied my post, I had surveyed the vicinity for a couple of versts round, and knew that on the side where the noise was heard, there was no road, and that the valley was bordered by hills which closed upon a wood. Our last patrol had discovered the enemy at a distance of thirty versts in

another direction : no attack was therefore to be anticipated from that quarter. While I was thus reasoning with myself, the moon suddenly peeped out from behind the clouds, and steel weapons gleamed among the bushes where the people were only half concealed. Judging by the eye, I concluded that there were about a hundred men there. What was to be done ? I followed the first impulse, sent a hussar to the camp to notify the appearance of the enemy, and advanced with my subdivision to attack them. We fell upon the Turks so rapidly, that they were put into confusion, fired some shots, and began to cry *amaun* (quarter) and threw down their weapons. We collected them into a body, disarmed them, fettered them with ropes, and drove them before us, covering our retreat with the half of the subdivision. One of my men who understood Tartar, questioned the officer who was made prisoner, and I learned from him that the Turks, having received a reinforcement, had advanced in order to attack us in the morning. The hundred Arnauts, whom I so fortunately took prisoners, had been sent aside on a foraging party ; but their guide, a native Bulgarian, deceived them, led them into a wood, and in the night slipped away from them. After wandering about in the wood, they stumbled upon our outpost ; and not knowing where they were, but supposing they had got into the heart of the Russian army, they lost courage, and resolved to surrender on being attacked by a party which they fancied to be very strong, as it had the hardihood to fall upon them in the night time. In this the Turks confirmed a remark made by our Co-

lonel, that he who wishes to beat them must act on the offensive ; when they are received on the defensive, they always do mischief.

I sent a patrol forward—they trotted some versts in advance, and returned saying that there was no sign of the enemy. I halted, and waited for the return of the man sent by me to the main body with accounts of my having met with the enemy. In a short time, we heard the pattering of horses' feet from the side of our camp, and there soon rode up to us a couple of hundred Don Cossácks, under the command of a volunteer of a distinguished family. He had been sent in quest of renown from Petersburg, to the army which was under the command of his second uncle. I delivered over to him the prisoners with whom he returned to the camp, and I re-occupied my post till morning.

Arriving at the *polk*, on being relieved, I received the congratulations of my worthy Colonel and comrades. “ Bravo, Vejeeghen, bravo !” cried the officers—“ Thou dost honour to our crack-regiment.” The Colonel invited us all to breakfast, that is to say, to eat roast mutton, and empty a keg of Moldavian wine. My health was drunk, and a report was drawn up on the spot to the commander of the brigade, in which it was mentioned that I, with thirty hussars, had taken prisoners a hundred and twelve armed Turkish foot-soldiers. The Colonel, in a separate letter, begged a reward for me. My reputation was thus established through the regiment.

Pustomeyleen was the name of the volunteer who received the prisoners from me. This young man, who

had been educated by a retired French drum-major, reckoned himself a military genius, and in the society of his brother-officers was continually talking about tactics, great plans of operations, the movements of Turenne, Montecuculi, Prince Eugene, and Frederick the Great, criticising all our military movements and plans, and passing sentence upon all boldly and decisively. We sometimes made game of his universal knowledge, but more frequently paid no attention to what he said, and received him into our company merely because on bivouacs it is impossible to get rid of tiresome babblers. Pustomeyleen, on taking the prisoners to the *wagen-burg*, did not shew his face again in the vanguard, but remained sick at the headquarters. An order soon arrived in which it was said : “ That Pustomeyleen is rewarded with an order for taking prisoners a hundred and twelve Turkish foot-soldiers, with the co-operation of Cornet Vejeeghen, to whom, at the same time, the approbation of the commander-in-chief is communicated.”

This displeased my brother-officers, and made me quite furious. I rode up to head-quarters, abused Pustomeyleen, calling him a coward and a rascal, shook my fist at him and challenged him. I was placed under arrest, and was to be brought before a court-martial, but got off through the intercession of my brother-officers and Colonel, who again congratulated me, and consoled me with the Russian proverb : ‘ On God your prayer, and on the Tzar your service will never be lost.’ “ Be comforted, Vejeeghen !” said my worthy Colonel to me. “ Thou has fulfilled thy

duty : thou hast shewn thyself a brave and active officer, and hast acquired the esteem of thy comrades—that is the greatest of rewards to a noble mind ! Injustice and mistakes happen every where, but that should not cool thy zeal for the service. Have patience only, and truth will come out in its turn ; however much people endeavour to twist it and entangle it in intrigue, it will find a vent for all that.”

In a few weeks after this, our army halted in a position facing the whole of the enemy's forces, who were entrenched in a fortified camp protected by its advantageous situation. Arrangements were made for a general onset. The commander-in-chief came up to the vanguard at the very time when the Turkish cavalry flanked our hussars and Cossácks. The whole cavalry of our vanguard was in battle-array, and the foot under arms, while all were looking on at the individual conflicts between the Turkish horsemen and our hussars and Cossácks, as on a dramatic spectacle. The commander-in-chief with his staff, and a number of foreign officers stopped to enjoy this really attractive scene, where address and courage had so extensive a field for distinction. To give their due to the Turkish cavaliers, they excel almost all nations in the management of their horses, of their arms, and in feats of personal strength and dexterity, although their fiery bravery cannot withstand our steady courage and firmness in general attacks. Above all was distinguished a Turkish horseman richly caparisoned, on a white horse. With astonishing daring he came to close quarters with our flankers, and had already unhorsed

several of our very best hussars. The commander-in-chief was nettled at this display of Asiatic dexterity in the presence of foreigners, and in chagrin said to our Colonel :—" Have you nobody to match that bully and punish him for his arrogance ?" On hearing these words, I immediately seated myself on my mountain horse, opened out my Kirgheezyan noose, and asked the Colonel for permission to engage the Turkish horseman. He permitted me, but I observed that his eyes expressed commiseration mixed with love for me. " Vejeeghen !" said he, " I know that thou art no coward, but science is here necessary, and thou canst not have learned horsemanship in the civil service. I am sorry for thee !" " You shall see !" said I, while I changed my hussar-cap for a foraging one—gave a spur to my horse, and was off.

I had an extreme desire to take the horseman alive. I first fired a pistol at another Turk, then rodé up to the cavalier, fired another pistol at random, turned my horse's head, and threw myself to a side as if I was going to reload my pistols. The Turkish horseman, observing that I was quite separated from my countrymen, rode up to me precipitately, made towards my left side, and rushed forward in order to cut off my head with one blow of his *yataghán*. At this decisive moment I turned myself under the horse, while the Turk, losing his balance by the violence of the exertion, reeled back upon his saddle. I immediately resumed my seat, and riding up behind the Turk, threw my noose about his neck, pulled it, and he fell upon the ground. This unexpected fall on his back at

full gallop took away his breath. The reins of his stallion were thrown back into his hand over his shoulder, and the horse was stopped by the fall of his rider. I alighted, disarmed the cavalier, fettered him with the noose, lifted him from the ground, and threw him, insensible as a clod, over the saddle, upon his belly, leaped up behind him, seized the reins of his Turkish stallion, and galloped off to the regiment. A crowd of Turks ran forward, shouting, to rescue their leader, but our commander-in-chief ordered a couple of squadrons to trot out, and the Turks turned their horses' heads. When I reached the *polk*, there was a buzz and speaking through the ranks. The commander-in-chief with his suite came up to me, dismounted, and requested me to go towards him. I leaped from my horse, took off my prisoner, unbound him, and presented him to the general who embraced me, squeezed my hand and said: "I thank you for this gift, and make you this present in return." At these words he ordered his adjutant to untie a cross of Valadimir with a ribbon, and with his own hands fastened it to the strings of my jacket. "I will not forget you!" added he, and went away.

The officers of our *polk* surrounded me, congratulated, embraced me, and every one of them seemed as glad as if the triumph had been his own. The Colonel pressed me to his heart, and with feeling, said: "Thanks for maintaining the honour of the *polk*!" I was in extacy, and never in my life felt such joy. "Deliver to Petroff my Turkish stallion, and order him to bring me my fronting horse," said I to the

sergeant. "I am here !" uttered a voice at my back. Tears trickled from Petroff's eyes, but a smile played upon his mouth : he wished to kiss my hand, but I pressed him to my bosom : he was speechless. Taking my booty, he went slowly along the front, crossing himself and moving his lips. My worthy Petroff was praying for me !

Nothing else of consequence happened that day. Towards evening the troops retired into their position, and our Colonel went off to the commander-in-chief, who was posted with the principal division at two versts' distance from the vanguard. Within an hour after the Colonel's departure, a messenger rode up with orders for me immediately to appear before the General. The Colonel was waiting for me in the adjutant's tent, and I had scarcely dismounted when I was ordered into the tent of the commander-in-chief. I there found a number of generals and staff-officers. After me entered Pustomeyleen without his sword. "Cornet Vejeeghen !" said the commander-in-chief, "your esteemed Colonel has told me of your proceeding, of your capturing the Turkish detachment. The renown of that proceeding and the reward were appropriated to himself by this gentleman, (pointing to Pustomeyleen,) who unfortunately belongs to my family. I was led into a mistake and brought to do an act of injustice by people who do not know me, and thought to do me a favour by furnishing an opportunity to reward my relative. But in the army brave warriors are my only kindred : they are my full brothers, they are my children and nephews ! He who wishes to serve his

sovereign and country faithfully, ought to act justly towards those who are placed under him, and to reward nothing but merit, by which no harm is done to the service, as is the case when the partialities and preferences arising from relative ties and other private motives interfere. More harm is done by such injustice, than if no rewards were given at all. Recollect this, you who have the command ! So I congratulate you Lientenant Vejeeghen : as to you, Mr. Pustomeyleen, please to return immediately to St. Petersburg under the wings of your aunts and grandmothers, and do not shew your face again before me. There is plenty of room for you on glazed floors : on the rugged field of battle, scraping, bowing, and speechifying gentlemen are out of their element. Adieu !” Leaving the tent joyfully I saw Pustomeyleen, who seemed quite downcast. I wished to say something to console him, but feared I might give offence to his vanity. My comrades formed a circle about me, and drank to my health with three cheers.

Next day was a general action, in which a great deal of blood was shed, and both sides fought with determined obstinacy. The Turks were twice our numbers, but Russian bravery strengthened by discipline gained the day. Their fortified camp was taken by storm : artillery, baggage, a number of standards, horse-tails and prisoners, fell into the hands of the conquerors. The Turkish army was broken and scattered.

Our *polk* was in the action and greatly distinguished itself. But we lost much in killed and wounded, as we were opposed to the flower of the enemy’s forces.

While we charged sword in hand, I was rather heated, and separated from my hussars among the very thickest of the enemy's ranks, who could not run from us, as they had behind them a defile which was occupied by Janissaries. They fought with desperation: the Janissaries fired upon us from the sides and hollow of the defile: the sabres were in perpetual and furious motion; the word of command could not be heard for the noise and shouting; the trumpets sounded, and we broke through the enemy's ranks. I was so hemmed in that I could hardly manage my sword. Blows were showered down on every side, and I at random slashed away right and left. But I soon felt that blood bathed my eyes, and that my left arm had not strength to hold my horse. At this moment some one seized my horse's reins, and pulled him forcibly back. On getting out of the crowd I rubbed my eyes and saw that it was — Petroff.

I had got two wounds in the head, one on the left arm, and one on the right shoulder. The blood ran in streams, and I grew weaker and weaker every minute. At the distance of about a verst from the field of battle, Petroff took me from off the horse, took out of his saddle-bags ready-prepared bandages, ligaments and lint, washed my wounds with water and vinegar, bound them up, then replaced me on my horse, seated himself behind me on the krupper, and clasping his arms about me, conducted me to the *wagen-burg*, with his horse tied to my stirrup.

My wounds were severe but not dangerous. The only fear was, lest my weakness from excessive loss

of blood might end in exhaustion. I could hardly move my legs, and availed myself of the first opportunity to set off for Russia.

Petroff never stirred from me, but even slept beside me. No tender mother takes more care of her only child, her darling son, than the good old soldier cared for me ; boiling my victuals, giving me medicine, taking me under his arm to walk a little ; in the day-time, while I was asleep, driving away the flies, in the night-time starting if he heard me sigh or cough. He lived for me alone, and whenever I attempted to thank him, he would always make wry faces and say : “ When you thank me, your honour, there seems to be always something not right and out of place, as if I was ashamed of something. You know it is my duty to serve my commander : what is the use of thanking ! Grow well again, and that will be the best way to put me in a good humour.”

On arriving at Kamenetz Podolsk, I wrote to Meloveeden to Kieff, intending to set off thither if he should still be there. I addressed the letter to the commandant whom I knew : he wrote me back that Meloveeden had effected a reconciliation with his uncle and set off along with him to Petersburg. This put me into a dilemma, as I had very little money remaining, and had not the means to continue my journey to Moscow. “ It is a bad job, brother, to be without the needful,” said I to Petroff. “ That is very true, Sir ; but we have no reason to complain upon that score.” “ Why, I have only thirty ducats altogether.” “ A little more,” said Petroff, going into

the other room : he brought back two heavy bags. What is the meaning of this," exclaimed I in amazement. " Your money, Sir," replied Petroff : " there are here fifteen hundred full-weight Turkish ducats, and besides that here is a crest of diamonds." " From whence didst thou take that ?" " You took it, and I only kept it snug. When in the night-time you captured the foot-soldiers, I eased their commander of his turban and sash, lest they might fall into the hands of another ; and, when in the eyes of the whole *polk* you caught that swell of an Aga, I rode up to the spot where he lay stiff as a stock, and also took up his turban, knowing that the Turks are in the habit of hiding their yellow-boys there. Besides that, in his saddle I found two handfuls of gold ; and this is what has filled our treasury. I said nothing about it to you before, for fear you should give back the money to the Turks, or, what was more likely, gamble it away, as I saw that you had begun again to your old trade on the bivouacs, to drive away ennui." " Hear me, Peter ; the money is thine, and I will not agree to take it except as a loan." " Why should it be mine, when you gained it at the risk of your life ? Booty in battle is neither sin nor shame, but it is both sinful and shameful to plunder one's own countrymen, and screw it out of their provisions, forage, and even out of hospitals ! God be with them, but at any rate this money is fairly ours ! Take what you like, be it on loan, or be it your own, only take it : it is at your disposal."

I sold my horses, but kept my Turkish arms and

accoutrements in memory of my victory. After buying a comfortable calash, I set off for Moscow to recover my health, and arrived there safe in the end of the autumn.

CHAPTER XII.

I retire from the Service.—Remove to Petersburg.—Difference between Petersburg and Moscow Society.—Wicked design.—Unfortunate young woman.—I am put into prison.—Happiness and misery may subsist together.

ON my arrival in Moscow, I immediately flew to my mother in her convent, and she almost fainted for joy at seeing me with a token of distinction. But my paleness and weakness disquieted her, and she advised me to leave the army, fearing that the military service might completely undermine my health. Peace was concluded—my worthy Colonel was promoted to be a General, and the *polk* given to another Colonel. I wished on my own part to repose, and taste the pleasures of quiet ; so, after collecting my certificates, I gave in a petition, and received my dismissal, with an elevation of rank and permission to wear my uniform. After visiting all my acquaintances and patronesses who already knew by report of my adventures, and gave me a flattering reception, I began to nurse myself, and did not leave the house for two months. My mother visited me every day—after consulting with her, we settled that I should set off for Petersburg, having now a fair claim to patronage, and petition for some comfortable situation which might afford me a livelihood. My curiosity was, besides, another inducement to visit that famous capital, where I hoped also

to find Meloveeden and cousin Annette, who had at last rejoined her husband and settled in Petersburg. My health being re-established, I provided myself with letters of recommendation, and in the end of the winter set off on my journey.

I arrived in the night-time, and alighted at Demuth's hotel. Next day I sallied forth through the town in order to make myself acquainted with the bearings of the streets, which I knew from the plan. The universal cleanliness, order, and a certain agreeable plainness in the midst of luxury, made a favourable impression upon me, and gave me a high opinion of the refinement of the inhabitants. Here I met with no Gothic equipages as in Moscow, nor any Harlequin liveries : neither found I the dirty lanes of Moscow, nor grotesque houses with monstrous figures, nor filthy shops and ruinous huts beside gorgeous and empty palaces. Before this time, I had no conception of an European city, and only now saw the reason why the inhabitants of Petersburg call Moscow an overgrown village. It is true Moscow stands before Petersburg with respect to its situation, antiquities, and historical recollections. Moscow is the heart of Russia, but Petersburg is the head. Moscow is the same to the people of Russia as Rome was to the descendants of Romulus after Constantine the Great had removed the seat of empire to the charming Byzantium. Moscow is the cradle of all the ancient Russian families : on the other hand, why should not Petersburg be dear to all as long as the name of Peter the Great and his illustrious successors is cherished in our memory ? Nevertheless

the heart always beats stronger at the recollections of Moscow. Like a Mahometan whose faith requires him to make a pilgrimage, at least once in his life, to Mecca, a true Russian reckons it the most sacred of duties to visit Moscow. The sight of the Kremlin and of the temples of God, which, in olden time, united the desires, the hopes, the joys, the sorrows of our ancestors, feeds the soul, and elevates our love of our country.

I sought out cousin Annette, who was extremely glad to see me. She introduced me to her husband, an unwieldy fat man, with a Tartar physiognomy, who lived in his own way, without troubling himself about his wife, played at whist, ate and drank for ten, and busied himself about *vodky*-contracts with the exchequer. He bowed to me drily enough, begged me to visit him, and leaving me alone with his wife, set off—to eat oysters. Cousin Annette told me that Meloveeden had been in Petersburg with his wife and uncle, for the purpose of cancelling his testamentary disposition, and various writings and bills, which Avdotya Ivanovna had prevailed upon him to sign, while he was under her clutches. Having settled all his affairs successfully, Meloveeden resolved to abandon for ever the great world of which he was weary : he bought for himself a charming estate on the southern coast of the Crimea, and settled there along with his uncle, who had exchanged his old hobbies for *grande patience*,* and the Moscow Gazette ; had become a

* A game at the cards played by one person, requiring little or no attention, but merely to distribute them according to their suits,

great politician, and from the prophecies of Martin Zadek, Albert the great, and Bruce's Calendar,* foretold great changes in the world. Meloveeden and his wife laid it down as a rule to listen to him two hours a day, and for that he left them all his property.

Cousin Annette introduced me into some houses of the best society: in addition to this, I had letters from many persons of distinction in Moscow, and thus I soon formed an extensive circle of acquaintance. Petersburg society is in general much colder than that of Moscow, and in every house attempts are made to carry etiquette and punctilio to the utmost. The presence of foreign envoys gives to society a sort of diplomatic gravity and restraint which stiffens and strait-laces social intercourse. Here they do not like story-tellers, nor good-fellows, nor people who amuse the company by their talents, who are so much sought after in Moscow. In Petersburg every one must speak from notes, proceed upon plan, and appear in the house when he is wanted, like an actor in a comedy. Here every acquaintance is an object of calculation, and is valued for the sake of his consequence, his connections, or his family. Every one looks on his acquaintances as steps to the ladder of rank or

sometimes in the form of letters in the alphabet, such as the initials of the emperor's name or the like.

* Bruce was descended from a Scotch family claiming an alliance with the blood royal of Scotland; he was made a Count by Peter the Great, and seems to have imported the second sight from his native country; for an almanack composed by him still maintains its credit in Russia for its remarkable prophecies, many of which are said to have been actually accomplished.

fortune, and gets hold of as many as are necessary for him to reach the summit of his wishes. Some are received because they are necessary ; others, because they serve to amuse necessary people. The amusement is —— card-playing ; and so, he who can play high, is received into society in order to form a party for people of consequence. Petersburg passes for a musical city, or to speak more correctly, for a city where there is much singing and playing upon musical instruments. This is true, but hence does not follow the conclusion that there are here many real connoisseurs and amateurs of music. They play cards in order to avoid speaking, and hear music for the same reason : after dinner, the subject of conversation is—the weather. Nobody likes to tell his mind here, because every one is seeking or expecting something, and in such a predicament dialogues are dangerous. The frank discoursiveness of Moscow, the freedom from restraint in behaviour, and the old-fashioned Russian hospitality, are reckoned here unsufferable rudeness and Gothic barbarity. Here they bid no one as in Moscow, at first sight, to come every day to dinner, and spend every evening, but invite you out of favour ; and, as every body is here busy about something or nothing, you must not visit your acquaintances except upon set days and hours, and at fixed times. In Moscow the language of high life is a strange medley of French and Russian ; but in Petersburg, you do not hear a word of Russian : you must speak French with the pure Parisian accent, and the smallest blunder against the rules of grammatical precision is noted as ignorance.

In Moscow they sometimes speak of Russian literature, the Russian journals and authors ; but, in Petersburg, that is a mark of *mauvais ton*. The learning of the great world does not extend farther than criticising French literature according to the system of La Harpe, conning over the articles of the *Journal des Debats*, and reading English romances in the original. Not one Russian writer or artist of eminence is received into the higher circles, unless he enjoys the special patronage of some man of note. There is one exception to this rule, to wit, a regard for Moscow notability : the master or mistress of the house, on presenting a new man not known in the Petersburg world, apologizes by saying that he is known in Moscow. The youth of Petersburg, even before they come to maturity, gather an air of coldness in their behaviour, which makes young people particularly insufferable and disagreeable. They make their friendships not from any coincidence of taste and habits of thought, but from the importance of the connexions and relations of their comrades. Every man who cannot do anything for them, who can neither help them forward himself, nor put them in the way by means of his friends, is reckoned a useless member of society : they behave towards him haughtily and even shun his acquaintance. The females also are subject to the general spirit of place-hunting ; they are as cold in their demeanour as the gentlemen, and, to say the least, are too dead, at any rate, so far as outward appearance goes. Tenderness and sympathy follow the fashion like bonnets. The ladies of Moscow scold and romp, but with all

their faults they have hearts which feel, as well as hands which help. Here they sigh, talk most sentimentally upon morality, and set lotteries agoing for the poor. A Petersburg ball would appear to be under the management of a co-operative society consisting of a French ballet-master, a Chinese master of the ceremonies, a German knight of a rueful countenance, and an Italian scene-maker. Every thing in its place, enough of every thing, but more than all, *ennui*. In Moscow, on the contrary, they sometimes dance out of tact, sometimes the musicians go out of tune, sometimes there are tallow-candles amongst the wax-lights, sometimes the floor creaks in the dancing-room ; after a hearty supper there is sometimes too much Champaign drunk ; sometimes there is more noise at a ball than at a market : however, the merriment arises not from custom, but from the overflowing of the heart : people come to town expressly for the purpose of dancing and merry-making. — — — But I have made too long a digression, and have forgotten to say that there is no rule without exception, and that every thing which is here mentioned in a general sense must be understood only in part.

I played high at whist, danced, spoke the purest French, sang and played the piano-forte at domestic concerts, rode in a carriage with four horses, and had *connexions* with Moscow, that is to say, I could talk for half an hour with the lady of the house concerning her Moscow relations and acquaintances ; consequently I was received and invited every where. But accustomed to the friendly and flattering attentions of Mos-

cow society, I was wearied with frequenting houses where the entertainers hardly vouchsafed me a look, or question about my health, or remark about the weather. I was necessary to no one, and those who received me thought they conferred an obligation upon me. Besides, I perceived that a party was forming inimical to me, composed of malicious old men and youth infected with intolerable pride.

The friendship of cousin Annette, and the small but excellent circle of her acquaintance, made up to me for the disgust which I felt at the great world, in which Annette appeared merely for the sake of convenience.

Summer came, the town emptied, every body went to their country-seats, and still I had done nothing for myself. Cousin Annette advised me to gain, in the first place, the good graces of some notable statesman, and after that be on the outlook for a place. The statesmen were extremely condescending towards me at the card-table, and in conversations about the weather; but I had scarcely hinted in the most distant manner my wishes to make myself useful to my country, and avouched my zeal for the public welfare, when the face of the statesman put on such a cold appearance, that the blood almost froze in my veins. I would sooner throw myself into a thicket of sabres than try to melt out of a heart of ice a drop of sympathy for my fate. The ladies would only interfere on behalf of their own relations, and so I resolved to wait with patience till something should cast up in my favour.

One day having gone out in the morning, and re-

turning home to dress for a dinner to which I was invited, I found a letter in French, in a female's hand of writing, of the following purport. "I know that you are as discreet as you are amiable. Come to-night at twelve o'clock, to the village of Emelyánovka beyond Yekaterenhof. Leave your carriage at the end of the village, and proceed alone on foot by the waterside. There in a solitary cabin, above the windows of which you will see a bunch of fresh twigs, a person waits you who takes a very lively interest in your fate. Circumstances oblige her to conceal herself and to be your friend in secret. Come, and you will learn all."

A love intrigue, thought I. And so, notwithstanding all their prudery, and eyes which cannot look up in the presence of a stranger of the other sex, the ladies here have a *penchant* for solitary places out of town! O those country-houses, what a charming invention! One may observe all due decorum—may go out for an airing to a solitary summer-house, hired in the name of some obsequious dependent, take a trip to the colonists to drink cream, &c. &c. Excellent, excellent, thought I: this will be some relaxation to make up for my ennui. I resolved to go to the place of rendezvous.

At twelve o'clock I was at the appointed place, found the solitary cabin, knocked at the wicket, an old woman opened it, and I entered the cottage. In the first apartment I found no one except a footman who stood at the folding doors: he immediately rapped them to behind him, and went out into the porch

as soon as I crossed the threshold. At this very moment three unknown men came out of the inner room, and one of them accosting me, begged me to sit down on a stool beside him, and listen to what he had to say. I was somewhat fluttered at this sudden and unexpected scene, but I resolved patiently to await the issue. "Ivan Ivanoveetch," said the unknown person to me, "it depends now upon yourself alone either to make or mar your fortune irrevocably. Though not born in lawful wedlock, you belong to a family which wishes to do something for you. If you are willing to sign this paper, and acknowledge it here in the notary's book, by that step you will make up for the injustice of one of the members of this respectable family; you will receive immediately twenty thousand roubles ready money, and besides, you will all your life-time enjoy the patronage of persons of great weight; you will procure such a situation as you want: you will have ranks and orders: you will get richly married: in a word, you will be a lucky man. If you refuse, your ruin is inevitable. Proofs of heavy offences will be brought against you, and not to mention Siberia, you may even fare worse. You are nobody: you stand by yourself alone, without family, without patronage: your acquaintances will leave you on the first breath of misfortune, and the ladies who have assisted you in your small affairs will shun you as a criminal on whom the disposers of wealth and power have set the stamp of reprobation. Make up your mind—here are the papers and ink—sign them —— and God be with you! The money you may take first if you

chuse—here it is !” While one of the unknown persons was speaking, another placed upon the table two sheets of stamped paper full of writing, and a large book, while the third counted out the bank-notes. After a short pause, I replied : “ My good Sir, if your business had been fair, your proper course would have been to lay the proposals before me without any disguise. In the first place I beg you will inform me what family requires me to expiate the injustice of one of its members ? I know that I am indebted for my being to Prince Ivan Alexandroveetch Meeloslavsky, the last of his race. He died of his wounds without knowing even of my existence, leaving my mother with child. His property was divided into four parts among his second nephews, of whom I know nothing, as they were educated in foreign parts, and serve now in embassies. I was never on terms of correspondence with the relations of my deceased father, nor ever had any intercourse with them in the way of business. And so you will have the goodness to allow me to read the papers which I have to sign, and after that to consider well their contents before I resolve upon any thing. It is of no use to frighten me with Siberia, and with punishment for fictitious crimes. Know that I am not sprung from a cowardly stock ; my merits will speak for themselves ; and I will find protection in the laws of my country.” After saying this, I rose and went up to the table in order to take the papers ; but one of the unknown persons immediately snatched them up and put them into his bosom. “ And so you do not chuse to sign ?” asked the first unknown. “ I will

sign nothing without reading it," replied I. "That is your last word!" * "The last." "You have then yourself to blame," said the unknown. He ordered the carriage. Some minutes we passed in silence : a coach suddenly drew up at the door, and looking through the window, I perceived a female sitting in it. The three unknown persons took up the book, went hastily out of the cottage, seated themselves in the coach, and set off. I remained alone in the house.

The peasant-landlord and an old woman, his mother, asked me if I did not please to pass the night there ? "Who hires these lodgings?" asked I. "That is what we do not know, father," replied the peasant : the house has stood empty upon our hand all summer, and yesterday some gentry came here and hired it for a single day, dined here, and off they have gone. I think *you* should know better who they be." I left the house and went away hurriedly towards my carriage, bewildered in thought about this extraordinary adventure. Going down to the sea-shore, and passing by some bushes, I heard a rustling ; I looked that way, and the same moment a shot was fired ; the ball whizzed by my head. The night was clear as day. On a sudden, a man rose up from among the bushes, and I recognized Vorovaateen !

He set off as fast as he could run among the brushwood, and in his flight loaded his piece. Being unarmed I did not venture to follow him, but ran to the spot where I had left my carriage. I did not find it,

* A Russian idiom used in bargaining.

but perceiving in the sand the marks of its having been turned, I conjectured that it had probably been sent back to town by the evil-minded persons. I snatched up a cudgel, and went along the sea-shore to Yekaterreenhof.

Walking at a quick pace, and frequently looking about me for fear of pursuit or ambush, about half-way I heard a rustling in the wood. Summoning up all my presence of mind, I resolved to face a danger which it was impossible to avoid, being convinced that in a decisive moment boldness will generally baffle the most skilful calculation. Shouldering my cudgel I plunged into the wood where I saw something fly past, and there I found —— a female.

“Have pity upon me, ah, have pity upon me!” exclaimed she: “I am unfortunate enough already.” I stopped, thunderstruck. That voice was known to my heart: it touched me and put my blood in motion. It seemed as if I heard the voice of Groonya. I took the female by the arm, silently led her out of the wood, looked her in the face, and a sudden thrill went through every nerve, and vein, and artery. A maid in the very bloom of youth, charming as an angel, stood before me; and putting her hands upon her breasts, with her eyes prayed for sympathy. I looked upon her, but could not pronounce a word. Her dark nut-brown hair was dishevelled, and hung carelessly over her shoulders. Her long eye-lashes were wet with tears: her deep azure eyes reminding me of the bewitching eyes of Groonya, expressed fear and hope: her charming mouth was half-open and seemed ready

to cry for mercy. She was dressed in white, and covered with a dark mantle. "What do you here in the wood alone, and at this hour?" asked I at last. "I fled from deceit, from treachery, from debauchery, and I do not know where to conceal myself; I am afraid to return alone to the town, and I have no place of refuge where to lay my head!" "Come along with me; I will be your guide and protector. Here have I also met with deceit, treachery, and assassins." Without waiting for an answer from the young woman, I took her by the arm and pulled her along. Her arm trembled in mine; with inquietude she gazed upon me, and hurriedly followed me. I stopped. "You are afraid of me," said I: "I swear by God, and by the honour of a Russian officer, that I have no bad intention towards you: I am ready to sacrifice my life for the protection of your honour, and while I am alive, no one shall dare to touch you." "I believe you," said the young woman; "be my guardian angel: I am unfortunate, very unfortunate!"

I was in such confusion that I could speak no more, and went along silently, holding her arm. At the end of the village which borders on Yekaterenhof, I perceived my carriage. My hired footman was sleeping on the grass, the coachman and *vorreiter* were slumbering on their seats. I awakened them. "Why hast thou left the place where I ordered thee to wait?" asked I the footman. "I was ordered, in your name, to set off for Yekaterenhof." "Who ordered thee?" "A footman dressed in livery and gold lace." My conjectures were confirmed. I requested the young

woman to sit down in the carriage. She obeyed in silence. "What do you mean to do with me?" said she, bursting into tears when she heard me order the coachman to drive into town at full speed. "I told you that I have no place of refuge. I am a poor orphan thrown by fate on the world, without a home." "Be comforted: I am a bachelor: I will not dare to take you to my own house. I will procure you a shelter with a respectable lady: but I beg you will not conceal your condition from me, but tell me the particulars of your misfortune." "Without doubt, I must tell you every thing which has happened to me; but give me your word not to pursue the people who threw me into the condition in which you have found me." "I give you my word." "Listen then."

"My father had the rank of staff-officer, and was a poor nobleman. He served as secretary with a functionary who was married to a rich widow having a daughter by her first marriage: this daughter was my mother. The secretary fell in love with his superior's step-daughter, and was loved in return. The lovers having no hope of getting the consent of the proud step-father, married secretly. I may say in a few words, that the marriage was discovered, the daughter turned out of doors, and disinherited in favour of the children by the second marriage. My father at the same time was expelled from the service.

"Working hard for a subsistence, he died five years ago. My mother employed herself in my education, taught me foreign languages, music, needlework, and gained a livelihood by taking in work, and by giving

lessons in a female boarding-school. It is now two years since she died, leaving me a friendless, houseless orphan !” At these words the young woman wept bitterly. After a short pause she continued.

“ The boarding-school in which my mother gave lessons no more existed. I knew no one in the town except a Frenchwoman, who kept a dressmaker’s shop, to which I carried my mother’s work for sale. I went to the Frenchwoman, and with tears begged her to receive me into her workshop. She complied with my request, and gave me a respectable situation among her sempstresses ; she caressed me, gave me good clothes, and behaved towards me in general better than to the other sempstresses. I wrote to Moscow to my grandmother, representing to her my unfortunate condition, but received no answer. Two years I lived there comfortably. Yesterday I completed my sixteenth year.

“ My mistress presented me with a new gown on my birth-day, caressed me more than usual, seated me beside herself at dinner, took me an airing with her out of town, and in the evening, calling me into her room, said : “ Oleenka ! Here is a basket with a ball-dress, which you will take with you in my carriage to a country-house on the Peterhof road, where that old man lives who comes here so often, and speaks so kindly to you. This gown is for one of his daughters. From this time you will have to fill the situation of my assistant, and go my errands. The gentry like when such sweet creatures as you call upon them, and pay much better than they do old

women like me. Be respectful, my good girl ; don't be shy ; know and recollect that you are not ugly, and learn to take advantage of your beauty. Youth does not come twice in a lifetime."

" Not daring to disobey my mistress, I took up the basket, seated myself in the carriage, and set off under the guidance of the coachman. I was well acquainted with the features of the old man to whose house my mistress sent me, but did not know his name. He bought and ordered a great deal at our shop, made presents of confections to the sempstresses, and behaved towards us very kindly and respectfully. It was rather late before I arrived at his country house. A footman took me into the hall, and begged me to follow him into the inner rooms. Thinking he was conducting me to the young ladies, I followed him boldly, till I found myself in the old man's cabinet. He was sitting in his sofa in his morning-gown, beside a table laid out with fruit, preserves, and wine. " Sit down here, my angel," said he : " But where are the young ladies ?" asked I, in confusion, not knowing why. " They will be here immediately, but take a seat and don't be obstinate !" I seated myself on a chair, but the old man dragged me to the sofa, and plied me with fruit and wine. I refused the wine, but, not to offend him, took a little fruit. He began to pat my cheeks with his hand : in consideration of his years I took no notice of that ; but when he proceeded to take liberties which were not fitting either for him or for me, I indignantly started from my seat, and attempted to leave the room. The old man laid hold

of my arm, and said : “ I say, my dear, you must not be childish or obstinate : Love me —— and your happiness is fixed for ever and aye !” I looked at him contemptuously, and could not say a word from excess of indignation. The old man continued : “ I have an old and ill-tempered wife, and if thou wilt sweeten my life with thy love, I will give thee the first day thirty thousand roubles, and, by a regular document, bind myself to pay thee an annuity of ten thousand. Thou art still so young, that, ten years after this, thou mayest easily find a husband ; and, if thou be constant to me during that time, I promise thee to add in the tenth year other thirty thousand.” My patience forsook me. “ How dare you propose to me ignominy and prostitution ?” exclaimed I. “ You have certainly never known any honest woman in your lifetime, when you venture to suppose that love may be bought for filthy lucre. Are you not ashamed, considering your years, and that you are a married man, to think of seducing a poor young woman ?” “ But thy mistress, my love, has already sold thee to me. Thou art owing her for clothing, and for maintenance.” “ My mistress is as despicable a creature as thou art !” said I, putting away his hand, and when he attempted to stop my retreat, shoving him so that he fell down upon the sofa. “ Dishonourable tempter !” said I, standing in the middle of the room, and taking a knife into my hands ; “ Let me go, or I will teach you how you injure a Russian gentlewoman. Know that I am the daughter of the counsellor of court, Alexander Uralsky, and of the general’s daughter, Eugenia

Sláveen. I am thy equal in birth, and thy superior in nobility of feeling. Let me go, you scoundrel!" I had scarcely named my parents, when the old man covered his face with his hands, and exclaiming, "My God!" ran into the other room. Not being able to open the doors, and not daring to go into the room to which the old man had retired, I opened the window, jumped into the garden, and found a wicket which opened into the road. Of the neighbours I asked who lives in that house, and learned that my tempter was Grabeelen, my grandmother's husband, the monster who deprived my mother of her inheritance."

"Grabeelen!" exclaimed I: "that rascal I knew from my childhood. My God, what a strange fate!" Olga continued:—

"Amidst my distraction and indignation, I did not know what to do with myself. I was afraid to go towards the town for fear of the rascal pursuing me; so I took the opposite direction. Perceiving a road on the right, I struck into it without thinking whither it might lead me, and at last found myself in a wood. I waited an opportunity till I should see some good people going past. Some carriages passed along the road, but nobody else appeared. I began to lose hopes, and resolved to pass the night in the wood, when on a sudden you came up, and made directly towards me. I was terrified, but when you looked into my eyes, my fear vanished, and I felt, I do not know right, not terror, but something terrible, and at the same time consoling. I was afraid of a person of the other sex,

but my heart whispered to me that I had found a generous protector. In your eyes I read that you will not injure me."

"Your heart guessed right, Olga Alexándrovna : henceforth I am your father, brother, and protector ! Rely, in all things, on God and on me. As long as I live, you shall want for nothing, and I ask nothing of you in return,—nothing but the favour that you will believe me that I am ready to risk my life for you, without being actuated by selfish motives. Do you believe me ?" She squeezed my hand, and in tears, said : " I believe you are a noble man : God will reward you !" I ordered the coachman to drive to the good cousin Aneta's.

It was by this time three o'clock in the morning. All in the house were asleep, but I ordered them immediately to awaken the hostess. She came to me shuddering from fear, thinking that something extraordinary had happened to me. I said nothing of my adventure in the solitary house, as Cousin Aneta did not know the secret of my birth : I merely related to her Oleenka's story. The kind and worthy Aneta gladly received her into her house, and thanked me for bringing the unfortunate girl, as if I had conferred a favour upon herself. Noble woman ! I returned home quite distracted.

Of course I did not sleep. I was in love. Oleenka had kindled a flame within me, not such a blazing, devouring passion, as the bewitching Groonya had raised in my heart, but a love, sweet and tender, which knows no other desire but the happiness of

the beloved object, and excites not a single earthly thought connected with external charms. Oleenka seemed to me to bear a considerable resemblance to Groonya, but in such a way as if Groonya's picture had been drawn with the look of an angel, and an expression of modesty which was wanting in her. Groonya's beauty was splendid ; Oleenka's was melting. Groonya's looks devoured the heart and put the blood into a feverish motion ; Oleenka's looks poured into the soul a soft delight. It seemed to me that I fell in love with Oleenka on account of her likeness to Groonya ; but at the same time I felt that if she had been an exact likeness of Groonya, I could not have loved her as I did. Oleenka appeared to me the ideal of beauty which had long existed in my imagination, and which I sought in my heart. Was not my love to Groonya first occasioned by that resemblance to the idol of my fancy, which at last I found in Oleenka ?

When I had no more strength to think, I fell asleep : I was agitated with strange dreams. A serpent of a frightful size attempted to devour me. I awoke at four o'clock in the afternoon, alarmed and restless ; my heart beat strongly, and at that moment Petroff entered the room and said : " Your honour ! The police-officers require you immediately to dress yourself. Here they are."

One of them announced that he had orders to seal up my papers, and to take me with him to the town-prison. " Was it told you what I am accused of ?" " No, but you will learn that soon." Guessing

whence this blow had come, I hastily dressed myself, and leaving two other officers in possession of my lodgings, I ordered Petroff to go to cousin Aneta's and tell her what had happened to me, and to wait in her house till the affair should come to an issue.

In the prison I was conducted into a separate room, and told that if I had money I might live as I pleased ; I was only to be kept within the walls. In an hour after, cousin Aneta came, along with Oleenka. Petroff was with them. They were allowed to see me in the receiving room in the presence of the turnkeys. Aneta's countenance shewed the state of her mind : Oleenka could not restrain her tears : Petroff looked grave and grim. "What have you done ?" asked Aneta. "A hellish plot of my relations which I do not quite understand, but have some faint conjectures. I swear to you upon my honour that I am guilty of nothing. Let us have patience ! They will not punish me without a trial, and then I shall learn of what I am accused, and have an opportunity to justify myself."

I took some money from Petroff, and begged Aneta not to come to me in prison for fear of endangering her reputation. "You do not know women, when you speak in that way," replied Aneta ; "female friendship is known, where the friendship of the other sex vanishes, and we free ourselves from all restraint to fly to the succour of the unfortunate. No, my dear friend, I will not forsake you." "Nor I," said Oleenka, in tears : "you are my deliverer and benefactor."

She could not say more—her sighs deprived her of speech.

We were obliged to separate, in order to free the attendant from the painful duty of being a witness of the outpouring of our friendship. “Your honour,” said Petroff, “I did not leave you on the field of battle, and will not abandon you now, whatever may happen. Let your enemies beat the alarm as they like. Petroff will remain by you, till death strikes his evening-drums ! A Russian soldier does not leave his watch in the hour of danger !”

Three weeks I passed in confinement, in company with the guilty and guiltless. I saw humanity degraded, and virtue unfortunate : I saw vices and weaknesses, but I have no inclination to describe them. Let a dark veil cover this receptacle of sorrows. Why should I lay open afresh the wounds which my feelings received from the hearing of crimes and the witnessing of scenes which, like pestilential herbs, corrupt the moral atmosphere ? I leave it to a man with a heart tempered by experience, with a soul cooled by an intimacy with vice in its most horrid forms, to draw a living picture of the inside of a prison.

Cousin Aneta came every day along with Oleenka to visit me. Petroff never left me except at night. I heard that, in public, people were afraid to mention my name, and that my fashionable acquaintances blamed themselves for having known me. Only a few good ladies took my part, and would not beforehand condemn me, for crimes of which nobody knew.

One day Aneta being unwell could not make her usual visit, and sent Oleenka alone. The attendant, whose duty it was to watch us upon these occasions, being convinced that our conversation was harmless, permitted us at last to speak alone, and retired to a corner : upon this, I left the room altogether, and availed myself of the opportunity to sound Oleenka's inclinations towards me. "Olga Alexándrovna !" said I, "you do not despise me in my degraded condition ?" She looked upon me emphatically. "Despise you !" said she ; "but call me plain 'Oleenka.' I am vexed when you behave so ceremoniously, as if I was a stranger." "You feel compassion for me, dear Oleenka ! But perhaps we will have to be parted for ever — — — I must confess to you that I cannot live without you, that I will die if I be snatched from you !" "Snatched from you, parted from you — never !" exclaimed Oleenka, and on a sudden blushed and held down her head. "I am persecuted by people of great influence," said I. "I am a friendless orphan as well as yourself. They threaten to send me to Siberia." "I will follow you," replied she ; "will work for you, and befriend you as you have befriended me !" "O God, how happy am I ! Oleenka, dear Oleenka, I love thee more than life itself—and thou" — —. Oleenka threw herself about my neck, and bathed it with tears. "I am thine, thine for ever !" exclaimed she, sobbing.— "Perhaps it is not right for me to declare myself : but I have not strength to disguise my feelings—I love thee !" I never was so happy as at that moment.

The prison became a temple of bliss. I could say nothing, but squeezed Oleenka's hand, and washed it with my tears.

The attendant came up to us, and we were obliged to separate. I went into my room, shut the door, and remained alone the whole day.

At last the interrogatory points were laid before me. The first thing of which I was accused, was of leaving Russia for the Kirgheezyan *steppe*, of robbing, of making an inroad on the Russian frontiers, and of plundering caravans. In my justification I described every thing which had happened to me from the time of my leaving Moscow, Vorovaateen's treachery and my own illness, and referred to Meloveeden, Petroff, and lastly to Gayuk and the whole Kirgheezyan *aool*. I was accused of changing my faith in the *steppe*. I referred to the clergymen in Moscow before whom I had fulfilled the observances of our church after my return from the *steppe*. I was accused of assuming a false title, and, by that means, of obtaining a rank in the civil service. I confessed that Meloveeden called me a nobleman in order to introduce me into good society, but that in my passport nothing was written about my designation, but merely that I was a free man. To this I added that I had gained by my blood personal nobility, had been promoted to be staff-captain, and had received the order of St. Vladimir. I was accused of participating with card-table swindlers in the plunder of the Dooreendeens. I owned that I was involved with these people in consequence of my connexion with Groonya, but denied that I had any share in the

affair alluded to, and referred to proofs of my absence from Moscow at the time. In conclusion, I described my adventure in the solitary cottage at Emelyánovka, and Vorovaateen's attempt to murder me.

A week elapsed after I had signed the answers to the interrogatories, and I impatiently expected a decision of my fate. Oleenka scarcely ever left me. I made a confidante of Cousin Aneta, who gave us her good wishes, and undertook to exert herself for my acquittal.

CHAPTER XIII.

A deliverer.—It is not the place but the crime which dishonours a man.—Just punishment of a rascal.—Secret discovered.—Legacy.—Love and friendship.—Lawsuit.—Advocate.—Secretary.—A visit to the judges.—Good people all the world over.

TEN days I remained in prison after my explanation with Oleenka. On the morning of the eleventh day, I was striding up and down the corridor expecting Oleenka, or Petroff with a letter from her, when on a sudden an attendant ran up bouncing upon me, out of breath, so as almost to upset me; and recollecting himself, exclaimed, “Oh, that’s you : you’re just the man I want ! Please to follow me to his excellency !” Without giving me time to add a word, he ran down stairs repeating : “Preciseness with a vengeance ! Plague upon those generals !” On entering the receiving room, I saw a man in a rich embroidered uniform, with a ribband over his shoulder and two stars. I made my bow and awaited his commands. “You do not seem to know me, Ivan Ivanoveetch ?” said he. I looked into his face, and was afraid I might be in a mistake. “You do not recollect the *turbulent* man ?” added he with a smile. “Is it you, Peter Petróveetch ?” exclaimed I, holding up my hands and standing stock-still. He threw himself about my neck and pressed me to his heart. “Do

you remember my words," said Peter Petróveetch, that truth will float to the top like oil? Here you see I am now covered over with honours which I did not seek, and my slanderers have been deprived of the means of doing harm or heaping up riches, by laying themselves open to all sorts of meanness. But let us go into your chamber, dress yourself and come along with me. You are free, acquitted, and the whole secret of your persecution has come out. Be not ashamed or downcast, because I found you in prison. You should bear in mind the inscription on the prison of Warsaw: '*It is not the place but the crime which dishonours a man.*'

I flew to my chamber, and Peter Petróveetch had scarcely time to come in at the door when I was already dressed. "Tell me, for God's sake tell me, why they pursue me, and what I have done to offend them." "You shall learn all, but now is not the time. Come along with me, and I will clear up all the mystery."

On the road, Peter Petróveetch questioned me concerning my adventures in the service, about Moscow, and about Meloveeden; but I was so full of anxiety to learn the secret, that I gave him confused and absent answers. On arriving at his house we shut ourselves up in his cabinet, and he spoke as follows:—

"The investigation of your affair was confided to me. I had scarcely read your answers to the interrogatory points, when I immediately conjectured that this was a continuation of the same intrigue for your destruction which had almost cost you your life in

Grenburg. Vorovaateen had been long known to me as an unprincipled man, who could stoop to any depth of villany. I ordered him to be arrested. In his lodgings were found bunches of false keys, instruments for forging assignats, counterfeit passports and post-orders, a quantity of stolen goods, in a word, all the marks of a connection and participation with thieves and other malefactors. I ordered some of them that were in custody to be examined, and they confessed that Vorovaateen was their guardian and confident, that he concealed their implements and booty, gave them passports and post-orders, and pointed out to them where to steal. Vorovaateen was also implicated in several murders. I promised to mitigate his punishment if he should be sincere in his confessions, particularly with regard to you. The rascal was so frightened that he told even more than he was asked. He was sentenced to lose his civil privileges, and to be sent to the galleys. This is what I learned from Vorovaateen concerning you :—

“ Your father, prince Ivan Alexandrovetch Meekloslavsky, was a man of an honourable and noble disposition. Before setting off for the seat of war, he made a will, by which he appropriated two hundred and fifty thousand roubles to the child which the peasant-girl Avdotya Petróvna should bring into the world. The money and will lie in the Bank of the Foundling Hospital. As an executor he named his friend Count Bezpetcheen, and left it to his charge to seek out the unfortunate victim of his weakness. The will contained, besides, the following clause, ‘ that

the heirs at law should only succeed to this sum, in case they could produce clear evidence of the death of the child, and in that case they were to pay to its mother an annuity of six thousand roubles during her life. If in the course of thirty years, neither the aforesaid Avdotya Petróvna nor her child should be forthcoming, the money was to be placed at the disposal of the heirs at law.'

"Count Bezpetcheen sent his man of business to seek out your mother, but his inquiries were fruitless, and he did not prosecute them, but soon let the matter drop altogether. After your father's death, his immense property was divided among his second nephews the two Counts Neetchtózyeen, and the two Tchesteensksys, children of the prince's first cousins. The mother of the Counts Neetchtózyeen, a native of Italy, or, as some say, of Pera, exclaimed loudly against the will, but did not dare to attempt to break it, because Count Bezpetcheen was in power, and the Tchesteensky family were against interfering. A long time was suffered to elapse, when Vorovaateen at last became acquainted with you. Knowing all the particulars of this affair from his intimacy with the Countess Neetchtozyeen, and having frequently seen your deceased father, he conjectured from your resemblance to the prince, and from that part of your history which he heard from your own mouth, that you were the son of prince Meeloslavsky, and that Adelaida Petrovna was the same Avdotya Ivanovna, whom Count Bezpetcheen had not succeeded in finding. By bribing your mother's servants, Vorovaateen and the Countess

Neetchtozyeen were allowed to rummage all her effects and papers at a time when she was not at home, and they found the portraits of prince Meeloslavsky and some of his letters, which confirmed Vorovaateen's conjectures. Fearing that the news of the legacy might come to your ears one time or other, the Countess wished to get you decoyed away from Moscow. Vorovaateen recommended Nojoff, who undertook to murder you and your mother. For as black-hearted as the Countess was, she would not agree to this : she did not wish to do you farther mischief than taking the money, and promised Vorovaateen fifty thousand roubles for his tronble, if he should succeed in getting from you a renunciation of your patrimony or any legal document to that effect. Vorovaateen clung to you, and coiled himself about you like a serpent, gained your confidence, and led you astray. He endeavoured to raise in your mind a passion for gaming, to lead you into dissipation, and after that thought to get your signature for a trifle. Your love for Groonya gave his hopes another impulse, and when you agreed to go with him to Orenburg, he had no more doubts of succeeding, now that you had arrived at that age when your signature would be valid. Nojoff was sent by the Countess to Vorovaateen's assistance. They were ordered to hasten the business, because Count Bezpetcheen was expected in Moscow, and there was some risk of his getting tidings of Adelaïda Petrovna.

“ Your sudden illness deranged their plans, and they resolved to make away with you, to counterfeit

your signature, and get the money from the Countess. Providence delivered you out of their hands. The forgery of your name to an acknowledgment, as if you had received the money from the Countess, and transferred your claims to her also, did not succeed. Although they counterfeited your hand of writing in a masterly style, they could not get any notary in Orenburg to attest this false document without your personal presence. Besides, the rascals quarrelled among themselves, and Vorovaateen delivered Nojoff into the hands of justice ; but, in order to escape from the vengeance of his accomplice, removed to Petersburg, assumed the character of a saint, and acquired the friendship and patronage of a person who was equal to himself in a higher branch of roguery. The Countess had, in the meantime, gone abroad, and lived in Italy with her children till your arrival in Petersburg. Hearing your name in company, and recognising you by your resemblance to the late prince, she resolved to make another attempt to deprive you of your inheritance, which had by this time accumulated to a million. She soon found Vorovaateen, and they again laid their heads together. Having no hopes this time, of obtaining your signature by craft, he resolved to make you a downright proposal to sign the paper, baiting it with money, and browbeating you with threats of persecution. The plan was as absurd as it was daring ; but rogues and villains would never be convicted and brought to punishment, if their excessive daring did not sometimes carry them too far. He called in to his assistance some lawyers who had been expelled from

the service, found an obliging notary's clerk, and these were the *dramatis personæ* of the scene at Emelyánovka. When you refused to sign the papers, Vorovaateen, afraid that you might chance to find him out in Petersburg, resolved to make away with you, and fired upon you from the bushes. In the meantime, the information against you being already drawn up, was lodged by one of Vorovaateen's accomplices. For the investigation of such weighty crimes of which you were accused, it was necessary to take decisive and speedy measures : you were arrested, and the case was put into my hands. I avoided seeing you, for fear of giving cause for suspicions of partiality in consequence of our previous acquaintance. In other respects, I investigated the affair with all the strictness of law, and you are acquitted merely because you are innocent, and not because your judge was your friend : for, if you had been guilty, though you were my own son, I would have subscribed your condemnation. The secret is now unriddled. The Countess has given in a petition for cancelling the will, resting her plea upon the prescription of the country, and because the money bequeathed to you was not acquired by prince Meeloslavsky, but received by inheritance : a lawsuit is thus fastened upon you, which may be a greater bore than even your captivity among the Kirgheez. You must defend the action, but I would not advise you to bring forward Vorovaateen's evidence, as you have no written documents to implicate the Countess, and the Neetchtozyeen family is numerous and powerful : consequently its honour must not be

compromised. Besides, all the steps hitherto taken have nothing to do with the legality of the will ; while, on the other hand, the bringing forward of such evidence might lead you into a mess of trouble. Adieu, for the present : apply yourself seriously to the affair, seek out a clever lawyer, and, at my leisure, I will advise you how to proceed. I have got so much business upon hand, on various commissions and committees, that I have scarcely time to breathe ; and, amidst all my desire to be useful, I must go through the greater part of my duty superficially. The man is to be pitied who has the name of being expert at business—he is then obliged to do the work of dozens of boobies !”

After thanking Peter Petróveetch for all his kindness, I hastened to the good cousin Aneta, or, to speak more correctly, to Oleenka. She had already heard from Petroff of my deliverance, and stood at the window impatiently looking on every side.

My secret would soon become public, in consequence of the lawsuit ; so I resolved to make a full disclosure to Aneta and Oleenka. I confess that I was loath to expose the faults of my parents, particularly my mother's frailty. But Aneta viewed the affair in its real colours, and even congratulated me on account of the princely blood which flowed in my veins. She assured me, that from the time of our first acquaintance, she had discovered in me marks of a high origin.—Oleenka did not open her lips. It would have been all the same to her though I had been the son of prince Meeloslavsky's coachman, because she loved me sin-

cerely, and true love never looks at pedigree. I begged cousin Aneta to publish my story in society. "If you wish this to be done effectually," said Aneta, "you ought to beg me not to publish it, but to tell it in a secret to some few of my female acquaintance: the news will then fly more rapidly than through the medium of the gazette. The word *secret* induces every woman to disclose it to her own friends also by way of *secret*, and thus it makes the round of the whole town, and is whispered into every body's ear. Women think that a secret is nothing else but a piece of news which must be repeated in an undertone with the formal precaution: "I tell it you in confidence, for I got it in a secret," &c. You see that I do not spare my own sex — that is due to our friendship."

Taking Petroff along with me I went to Demuth's hotel in order to hire fresh lodgings. The porter told me that travellers who had just arrived from Moscow had been inquiring for me and Petroff. I sent him to learn what Moscow acquaintances these might be, and in the meantime remained standing at the gate. On a sudden, I heard a shout on the staircase. It was Meloveeden—he threw himself into my arms.

"Whence comest thou, and why here?" asked I. "From home, from the Crimea, from the embraces of my wife and son, to thee, my friend, to help thee!" exclaimed Meloveeden. He laid hold of my arm and pulled me up the stair, saying: "Come along with me to mother." "How! Is she here?" "To be sure she is. She knew nothing of thy misfortune, because in writing thou saidst nothing about it, and she did

not believe reports." "I wished not to vex her." "I understand thee, but on receiving the news from cousin Aneta, I immediately bestirred myself, drove to Moscow, called upon thy mother, and when I told her what had happened, she begged me to take her with me." I squeezed Meloveeden's hand, and thanked him, but not in words. Real feeling is a poor speaker.

By this time, we had got up stairs, and the tears of my good mother bedewed my cheeks. After weeping and rejoicing, I told her in detail every thing which had happened to me, and explained the secret of my persecution. When I came to speak of the legacy, my mother was much affected and said: "I was not deceived in his soul! he thought of me, thought of the unfortunate pledge of our love. But I became unworthy of his heart and memory." She burst into tears, and we had difficulty in quieting her. In closing my narrative, I did not chuse to conceal the state of my affections, but made a full confession of every thing to my mother and friend. They did not oppose my inclinations: they only begged that I would not hurry my marriage, but wait till I became farther acquainted with Oleenka.

A fortnight had elapsed since my release. My mother went out nowhere but to church—cousin Aneta and Oleenka visited her every day. Meloveeden kept his vow, and did not appear in society. He passed the mornings in reading the newspapers and periodical publications, and in walking; called nowhere but on cousin Aneta and Peter Petróveetch, and, for amusement, went to the theatre. By Peter Petró-

veetch's advice I sent his house-steward to Byalo-Russia in order to seek out my baptismal registry, and learn in what way I had slipped into Gologordoffsky's house. In the meantime he sent me an experienced clerk out of his chancery, to give me some insight into the character and conduct of the different legal practitioners ; of whom I selected the most distinguished, and appointed to meet them at my lodgings, every one at a separate hour. It was doubtless a wearisome task to which I had to submit from six o'clock in the afternoon till midnight ; but this was only my first experiment in going to law : I did not know yet that in this labyrinth every step is attended with vexation ; and that, like a body covered with boils and blains, every turning and every movement occasions a fresh twitch of mental agony.

This chancery-man, Theodosius Savelleetch Kaveeken had entered the service in his childhood, was up to all the artifices of law-craft, and knew by rote the biography of all the lawyers and people about the courts. His head was a perfect lexicon of chicanery. He was a man of a cheerful temperament, and occupied his leisure time in collecting scandalous anecdotes of the courts of law : accordingly he was glad of an opportunity to display his knowledge, and to be useful to his superior's friend.

Of the advocates invited, the first who appeared was Mr. Duratcheensky, a man of middle age, with enormous whiskers, and dressed in the first style of fashion. He wished to play the part of a *petit maitre*, of a high-bred, accomplished man of the world ; but

his bent neck, his half-familiar tone, and his way of explaining himself evinced his low origin. "Excuse me for being rather behind my time. I am occupied in the service, in a highly respectable situation, and quite full of business. Besides that, private affairs, connections, acquaintances ! I am at present just come out of the English club where there are three senators waiting me to make up a party at whist. I am a member of the English club, and it is not everybody that can say as much. None but the most honourable and noble and distinguished characters are balloted in amongst us——so you may guess what an honour it is to be a member of the English club ! There I play high every day with the first people in the empire, settle business in a friendly way in the reading-room, collect a budget of news, and launch now and then some little story of my own under the rose. I advise you to manœuvre to get admitted into the English club. You cannot tell how useful it may be to you. There you get acquainted with every body worth knowing, give treats of Champaign, invitations to dinner, do your business — — —. It is true, I was not bred to private business : I draw my origin from a Count's family — — — but circumstances !"

Duratcheensky would have gone on at this rate all evening, but I gave him a note of my case, begged him to read it over by himself, and went into the next room where, by previous concert, Kaveeken and Melo-vedeen were waiting me. "What do you think of this swell ?" asked Kaveeken. "An empty, foolish braggart," replied I. "He is from the lowest class of

Lithuanians, and his nobility is all in his dress," said Kaveeken. "He was a boy, that is to say, a servant of Count Pyanotee, who taught him to read and write, and by an incomprehensible act of favour, made him afterwards his agent. What with the stories he tells on the one hand to the poor Lithuanian gentry of the consideration in which he is held in Petersburg, and on the other by what he makes the people in official situations here believe, of his provincial importance, Duratcheensky has raised himself out of the dirt, thrust himself into the service, and still continues to practise, that is to say, to deceive, to take money under false pretences from those who have business at law, and keeps it all to himself. He is such a block-head, that he cannot write a letter in any one language, but plays at whist, loses his money, brags that he has extensive property, and, owing to that, is tolerated among decent people. Turn him out without ceremony." I went back to Duratcheensky, took the note, and gave him his leave, telling him that I was engaged at present and would give him an answer afterwards.

After Duratcheensky, there came a little figure, a complete personification of chicanery. A little, dirty, withered, old creature, wrapped up in rags. He stood about a quarter of an hour unswathing his clothes, coughing, and clearing his throat, when at last he found his speech, and explained to me in the Byalo-Russian dialect, that his name was Pan Krootchkotvorsky, formerly chamberlain of the late Polish Court. "Now if you wish to gain your cause, my good

Sir," said he coughing, "the best thing you can do is to take me. All bad causes are put into my hands; if I don't gain, I will work your opponents so, that they will be glad to get rid of the law-suit, and give you whatever you demand." I put my note into his hands, seated him in an arm-chair, and went to Kaveeken, who said: "This is a rare adept at chicanery, who has attached himself like a chronic disorder to the courts of law for the last fifty years, though he was an old man before he came to Petersburg. Though dressed like a beggar, he wallows in riches. Would you believe that this wretched invalid has pocketed the dowries of three wives whom he has outlived. In making his marriage contracts, he regularly bargained that the longest liver should brook all. As he has carried a disease in his lungs for the last thirty years, you may easily imagine how tender females catch the infection, and wear out before the tough old stager. "Off with him! Off with him, lest he should contaminate the air by his very presence." I served Krootchkotvorsky in the same way as I had, Duratcheensky.

After Krootchkotvorsky, there came a stout, big, elderly man. He burst into the room like a wild boar, darted upon me a pair of wolfish eyes, and bellowed out his compliments in such a tone, that I took them for scolding. "Well, what? What have you got to do? Let me see it, and I will tell you immediately how to begin. But first of all, have you money." I put the note into his hands, and begged him to read it, but he refused. "I am not to trouble myself read-

ing other people's nonsense for nought. Down with your brass ; I don't move a jot without the needful !" I begged him to wait and went to Kaveeken. I had scarcely pronounced the advocate's name when Meloveeden got out with a " Bah !" and said ; " That is a famous solicitor of Mr. Gologordoffsky's, Pan *Struktchášy** Khapootchkévitch, a well known rogue who has changed his faith several times, has been banished for polygamy, and debarred from practising in the courts of law." " He has been several times banished from Petersburg," replied Kaveeken ; " but always finds his way back, like a fox to a hen-house. Away with the rascal, away with him !" " But tell me, if you please, why there are so many Polish lawyers here," asked I, " and why you give them such a bad character ?" " A substantial and respectable landholder will not remove to a strange place to live by practising the law," replied Kaveeken. " Honest and skilful advocates have at home sufficient means, not only for their maintenance, but for making their fortunes ; and besides, they enjoy universal respect. Owing to this, the only gentry who travel in quest of employment in this line, are chancery-clerks, advocates' assistants, and adventurers of all sorts, seeing that this is a very easy and lucrative profession, which requires neither stock nor skill except in lying and cheating. They take money from their clients on pretence of giving it to the members of the courts ; they keep it to themselves, and do nothing but abuse right and

* An old Polish title of rank.

wrong. These lawyers were for a long time a stain upon the character of the whole Polish nation, because the Russian functionaries who had never been in the Polish provinces formed their opinions of the people from these worthless samples. Things are now changed. Many well-educated and well-principled Poles have entered into the service at Petersburg, and by their behaviour have removed the existing prejudices. There are even among the lawyers worthy and respectable individuals (although very few,) and they, poor people, must suffer for the rest ! But go and turn out Pan *Struktchášy*." I proceeded in the same way towards him as I had done towards the two others.

After him, came the Titular Counsellor Zagadtchénko, a native of Malo-Russia. When he had finished his introductory compliments, "We Malo-Russians," says he, "are a simple, unsophisticated sort of people, and like truth and plain dealing. I will tell you frankly what is good and what is not good. I gave him the note and went to Kaveeken. "That is a man whom neither I, nor the devil himself knows : Some speak very ill of him, others call him an expert and attentive man of business. He has gained many causes." I repeated to him what Zagadtchenko had said. "That is a common Malo-Russian stratagem, to assume an appearance of simplicity. I know among them many very honest and worthy people ; I know many who have never cheated nor injured any one ; but I do not know one who would let himself be taken in, or who would forgive an injury done him. You know that there is a German proverb ; '*Er hört gras wachsen,*

(he hears grass grow.) I need not trouble myself explaining it, but merely tell you that the good folks of Malo-Russia hear the grass grow. The Russians, Poles, Bohemians, and other Slavonian tribes, like to shew off their wit. The Malo-Russians alone boast of their simplicity and roughness. Whenever a man gets the name of being subtle and artful, he can no longer avail himself of these qualities to the same extent as he otherwise might do. Consummate subtlety consists in being reckoned simple and rude. Recollect that in Turkey the rich Rayas feign themselves poor, in order that they may quietly enjoy their riches : the same thing occurs here with respect to intellect. But enough of this: dismiss Zagadtchenko. We will see afterwards what to do with him. I shall make some inquiries, and perhaps we may unriddle him at some chance moment !”

Lastly, there came a Russian advocate, Paphnooty Seedoroveetch Rubopéreen, who said in a decided tone that he would not undertake the business till he had looked over the documents, and come to some understanding with me regarding his compensation. I gave him the note, and returned to Kaveeken, who said to me : “ That is a man of business, who knows the laws, is a first-rate writer, and an indefatigable agent ; but give him no money beforehand, let him fast till he has a keen appetite, for he is rather inclined to bury his talent in the ground when he can get off with it ! I advise you to take Rubopereen. You will not find a better.” I told Paphnooty Seedoroveetch to make out an agreement and power of attorney, and,

in expectation of my messenger arriving from Byalo-Russia, I set myself to draw up a petition and memorial. We separated, and I was so wearied that I was hardly undressed when I fell asleep.

Meloveeden, notwithstanding all my entreaties, would not return home, but resolved to wait at any rate till my lawsuit was fairly commenced. I had already been ordered to produce evidence of my birth, and impatiently waited for the messenger's return. At last, after a delay of two months, Peter Petróveetch's steward made his appearance, bringing with him my baptismal registry, and for a witness, the Jew Josel, Mr. Gologordoffsky's old tacksman. Josel, from being a rich contractor, had grown poor in his old age, and employed himself in teaching the children of the new *kartchma* renter. Smuggling had been the ruin of him, and some of his rogueries had brought him to jail. This is the way in which I escaped out of the murderer's hands, and fell into Mr. Gologordoffsky's household.

When the midwife and Jew-doctor knew of my mother's flight, and were informed that she had found a protector, they packed up their moveables and decamped, taking me along with them. They did not think proper to murder me, supposing that, in case of their hiding-place being discovered, they might clear themselves from my mother's accusation, and quash the matter by restoring me. The Jew-doctor betook himself to his cousin Josel, without revealing the cause of his journey, but putting him off with a story of his having been invited by some rich Pan to settle on his estate as his village-doctor. He acknowledged,

however, that an officer had entrusted him with the boy of which he was the father by a peasant-girl who had died in childbirth ; and begged Josel to give me out to nurse, paying for a year beforehand. The midwife herself took me to the Russian clergyman, and ordered him to christen me, giving me the name of Ivan. When I began to crawl, the poor peasant-woman, my nurse, having lost her husband, was obliged to hire herself out to work in another village, and threw me by Josel's advice into Mr. Gologor-doffsky's house. The proof was clear, confirmed by the extract from the parish-register, in which it was distinctly mentioned that I was the son of prince Ivan Alexandroveetch Meeloslavsky and of Avdotya Petrónna. Josel stated further, that the Jew-doctor was drowned, with all his family, as well as the midwife, in crossing a ferry in a rickety boat. " Your cause is good," said Rubopereen to me, on seeing the matriculation, and you will gain it if you exert yourself and strain every nerve. Without that you will be cast."

I came to an understanding with the secretary of the court, by means of the juridical arithmetic which I had learned at Moscow from Moshneen's friend. My secretary embraced me, kissed me, and even shed tears of sympathy when he heard of the persecutions which I had undergone. There is no science in the world which is such a softener of hearts as this practical arithmetic ! The secretary assured me that I would gain my cause immediately, and pledged his honour, life, children, that he would sooner die on the spot than record a decision against me.

Peter Petróveetch advised me to distribute memorials to all the judges, and to endeavour to explain my case to each of them in private. Rubopereen did his best in the composition of the memorial: stated the matter clearly and shortly, and quoted the legal authorities in support of it. I hired a coach and set out one morning along with my memorials.

On entering the lobby of the first judge, I had to repeat to the lackey ten times that I wanted to see his master, and could hardly get any answer from him. The servant insisted that that was no affair of his, and that I must wait till the valet came. Notwithstanding my hussar uniform, before which the Turks trembled, and which excited respect among brave Russian soldiers, the judge's domestics scarcely deigned to look at me, and would not put themselves to the trouble of speaking. At last when I told them that I would go into the cabinet without any announcement, the valet walked leisurely thither to his master, and returned, saying rudely, "Go in!"

The judge, Mr. Dremotoonoff, was an elderly man, and after the old fashion still covered his grey hairs with powder and wore a queue. He was sitting in a white dressing-gown before a mirror, and the hair-dresser in a greasy grey jacket had his poll under operation. "Take a seat, my good man," said the judge to me. I handed him the memorial, and sat down. "Will you take the trouble to read it yourself, and I will listen," said the judge. I made him another bow, and began to read loudly, distinctly, and slowly. "Good, good, all right," pronounced the judge;

“ Senka, comb the crown, that’s the way, good, gently ! Your cause, sir, appears to be just.” Senka suddenly gave his hairs an untoward jerk, which made the judge exclaim : “ You scoundrel ! you are scalping me !” Then turning to me, his face flushed with pain and rage, he added : “ Chicanery, sir, it is mere chicanery ! All your reasons are not worth a pin — — —. Ah that rascally Senka, what a tearing pull he has given me !” In the meantime I ceased reading. “ Why don’t you read ?” I resumed the reading. “ Very well, Senka, that’ll do ; very gently ; now comb the right temple. Excellent, excellent !” added he turning towards me : “ your cause is clear, fair, and just—the law is decidedly in your favour,—Senka, you rascal, you are mangling me, that is a harrow in place of a comb ! Trickery, sir, fetches, it’s all a mess of chicanery !” exclaimed he again, and I again stopped. The judge pushed Senka to a side, and after taking his breath for a minute, ordered him to go on with the combing, and me with the reading. Luckily Senka went through the rest of the process without making any *faux pas*, and the judge rising from his chair in a good humour, wiped the powder off his face, and said : “ Leave the memorial : I shall look at the original papers in the court : it seems to me that your cause is good.” Overjoyed at this, I gave Senka a ten-rouble note in the lobby, and left the other servants to repent at leisure of their rudeness. Mr. Dremotoonoff was an old lawyer who had made his fortune, and at one time was over head and ears in business, but took the situation of judge in

his old age from mere ambition, and had at his beck the votes of some of his old friends.

Another judge, Mr. Formeen, whom I had met with in company, received me politely ; but, when I put the memorial into his hands, he shook his head, and said, " What is the use of this ? You do not suppose we are to be guided by the assertions of petitioners. I have been engaged in law-business for five-and-twenty years, and know it for an invariable rule, that all petitioners speak nonsense in their memorials." " My case is here stated with references to the laws and original documents," replied I : " probably the opposite party has done the same. If you will have the goodness to compare our statements with the evidence, and our references with the statute-book, you will see who is right and who is wrong." " Yes : I have been engaged in law business for five-and-twenty years, and I know what memorials are !" exclaimed the judge. " Memorials among us are equivalent to the voice of the advocates," replied I. " It also appears to me, that, without reading the statements of parties, and learning the strong and weak sides, you cannot understand the case any more than a doctor can understand the case of a sick patient without hearing the particulars of his complaint." " Theory, sir, theory !" exclaimed the judge : " But I am a practical man : I have been five-and-twenty years engaged in law business, and know every thing which it is necessary for me to know. It is not the parties but the chancery which states all the particulars of the case, and discovers the strong and weak sides." " But

the chancery, amidst its multiplicity of business, may occasionally omit or mistake things ; and besides, they are not angels but human beings." "What do you understand by that ?" said the judge in an angry tone. "I have had five-and-twenty years experience of chancery-business, and know it for an invariable rule that the complaints of petitioners upon chanceries are without the slightest foundation. But don't despair," added he, assuming a placid air ; "we will examine your case attentively, you may depend upon it." I nevertheless left on the table my memorial, adding : "Do not read it, but take it : it relieves the heart of a petitioner. I cannot suppose that you would be so hard-hearted as to refuse to listen to an unfortunate man. Not to read our memorials is as bad as to drive a beggar from your door." On saying this, I made my bow and retired. In the lobby I overheard the judge exclaiming, "I have been five-and-twenty years !" The footman who gave me my great-coat, said with a smile, "Our master confuses in his reckoning : it is fifteen years now since he stopped at the twenty-fifth year of his judge-ship !"

This judge was a worthy, honest man, but he had spent all his life in any thing but the duties of his profession. In the court he thought of his books, and at home he thought of the court ; in company he spoke about law, and in court he spoke about company. He always spoke well, but did nothing ; and if he had fulfilled but the thousandth part of what he reasoned about so beautifully, he would have been a useful member of society. He loved honest and well-in-

formed people, and was on terms of intimacy with them, but suffered himself to be overruled by rogues whom he despised and hated, but had not the firmness to drive away or refuse. A worthy man, but a real nullity, who had only the consideration of a cypher.

From him I went to Mr. Tchoovasheen, who passed for a great man of business and a giant of jurisprudence. He also was neither a rogue nor a fool ; but having, by means of his father's interest, attained a high rank in his youth, he lost himself in self-conceit, and sincerely believed that he had arrived at the summit of human wisdom. Educated among foreigners, and living always in the upper circles, gleaning what knowledge he had from foreign books, he did not know Russia, but looked at it through the prism of foreign ideas. In his old age his head was crammed with a conglomerated mass of theories, foreign laws and foreign commentaries, along with what knowledge of Russia he had picked up in conversation : all these jumbled together made such a chaos, that the good old man with the best intentions was continually committing absurdities. For a long time people did not understand his real character, but mistook his good intentions for great actions. At last they found that his head was nothing else but a lumber-room of mis-read books !

He received me in a civil and friendly manner : God save him for that ! but when I proceeded to explain my case to him, he almost put me into distraction by his remarks. According to his notions of jurisprudence, women and children were never in the wrong ; and, as Tchoovasheen had been already solicited by

the Countess Neetchitózyeen and her female friends, he would not persuade himself that I could be in the right. When I referred to the laws, he said that cases of this sort should be judged not by law but by conscience ; when I argued that according to conscience I should receive the money which was bequeathed to me in my father's will, he assured me that the law was against my claim. I pointed to the laws which were in my favour, and he, as a proof that he was acquainted with law, opened upon me whole bales of the writings of Bentham and other English writers on the theory and practice of jurisprudence. Wishing to display his legal knowledge, and the strength of his memory, he repeated pandects in place of ukases, and in place of English laws, quoted the code of Tzar Alexey Michaelóvitch, &c. I put an end to my visit, and with an aching heart left him. Before this time, as I had never any previous business with him, I reckoned him a great man, but was now convinced that public opinion is liable to be mistaken as well as private individuals. Tchoovásheen was an open protector of all peculators who had families, and screened them wherever and whenever he could. Many of these gentry married purposely in order to enjoy his protection, and wrote in their defence speeches which he delivered as his own. O human nature ! Tchoovasheen, notwithstanding his good heart, did mischief from mere self-conceit, and from a desire to pass for a Publicola.

A great part of the judges received my memorial in silence, and, by an inclination of the head, gave me a hint to retire. Others made me relate my adventures

in the Kirgheeian *steppe* and elsewhere, and would not listen to business. Others excused themselves, saying that they were quite busy with affairs of their own. Others complained of their poverty, of the difficulty of getting the loan of money, and congratulated me on my claims to a million. In some places I was received very rudely, in others with such hauteur and repulsiveness, that I lost my patience and abandoned my task in disgust. It is true I found a few of superior minds, who consoled me by their friendly reception, and whose candour and sound judgment lessened my apprehension of their colleagues. In the course of a week I had visited almost all my judges, was more wearied in this week than by the whole campaign against the Turks, and even sickened upon it from vexation. If it should be thy holy will, O God, to expose me to more trials in this life, send me disease, send me beggary, send me captivity, but save me from law !

In the meantime, Meloveeden received word from his wife, that his only son was ill. I begged my friend to return home, promising to be with him as soon as my law-suit should be over, which was likely to be soon, as the opposite party, possessing great influence, desired its termination as anxiously as myself. When it was on the eve of being brought on, the secretary privately shewed me the report which he had drawn up, to convince me that it was favourable to me, and also a sketch of the decision. I almost fainted for joy, but Rubopereen soon put an end to my exultation. A friend of his, a clerk in the chancery, shewed

him another report and another sketch of a decision in favour of the Countess Neetchtózyeen, which the secretary meant actually to present to the judges. I mentioned this to Peter Petróveetch, who bestirred himself in my favour, and by his influence turned aside the worthy secretary's purpose on the very day when the report was to be given in. "I am a poor man," said the oracle of the court, "but will not sell my conscience.—Neetchtózyeen offers me five-and-twenty thousand roubles—I confess I am a sinful mortal—I would have taken the money if her cause had been good—but to do wrong I will not take a kopeek. You are not yourself a rich man at present, but when God rewards you, perhaps you will recollect my children." Although in strict justice much might be said against this sort of honesty, still, looking to things as they are, I was glad that I had met with such a good man. At last my cause came on.

CHAPTER XIV.

Usurers.—End of the Law-suit.—Marriage.—Kindness of a Grandee.—Routine of public business.—Rising people find relations.—Retirement from public life.—Conclusion.

My purse at this time was empty, yet I was not inclined to sell the crest of brilliants which I always regarded as Petroff's property, purposing to pay him for it whenever I should be in funds, and to keep it as a trophy of my victory. I might have borrowed money from Peter Petróveetch, from cousin Aneta, or from Meloveeden, but I did not chuse to tronble them—so I resolved to pledge the crest. Rubopereen went with me to the money lenders. We first entered a small hole of a shop about seven feet square, crammed to the ceiling with old tattered books in all languages, ancient and modern, covered with dust and spiders' webs. At the other end of this kennel were slumbering, cheek by jowl, a lean tom-cat and the shop-boy. Rubopereen awakened the sleeping sentinel with a fillip on the nose, and asked for Taraseetch. "You know, in the morning he goes about the courts and public offices, but now it is almost the time when he should be back here." "How can the tenant of this beggarly hole be a monied man?" asked I of Rubopereen. "Three hundred thousand at command, neither more nor less," replied Rubopereen. "This

shop is nothing more than a pretext, a corner for meetings and bargains, a sign-board of the residence of Taras Tarasoveetch Kashtcheyeff. It is a pity that this is not Saturday, the day of settling and paying the debts of the week among merchants : you would see how the shopkeepers and owners of rich warehouses and magazines flock about this hole, how they wink to Taras Tarasoveetch and beckon to him to call at their shops : he takes only three per cent. per month on pawn from people that he does not know, and to safe people he lends also upon their own bill. But let us go to another—we will see how much he is willing to give, and what value he puts upon the article.” We went to the rag-market, and there, in a booth patched together from old boards, found a middle-aged man who was occupied in reading “ The History of Vauky Cain.” On the shelves in the shop there lay old nails, brass buckles, rusty padlocks, buttons, pomatum-pots, and empty phials, pieces of chalk, copperas, leathern straps, broken tea-cups and plates ; in a word, all the riches of the ash-pit. “ How d’ye do, Paphnooteetch ?” said Rubopereen, tapping him on the shoulder. “ Good day to your honour !” “ Well, are you always flush of money ?” . “ What money is to be got now-a-days, sir ; trade goes on so wretchedly !” I could hardly keep from laughing at this complaint : Paphnooteetch repeated it in imitation of merchants, who, while they are continually increasing their gains, complain all along of the ruin of trade. “ Have mercy upon us, my dear sir,” said I ; “ when were your goods in de-

mand ! What reason have you to complain of tariffs and custom-houses ?” “ Why should not I complain, when great merchants have their complaints likewise. Don’t you know that the retail trade follows in the wake of the wholesale ? When the one goes forward the other goes forward ; when the one goes backward, the other goes backward.” “ A truce to your reasoning, Paphnooteetch,” said Rubopereen : “ here is a crest of brilliants ; the jewellers have valued it at fifteen thousand roubles : how much will you lend upon it ?” “ Jewellers valued it !” exclaimed Paphnooteetch, “ but go and sell it to them, and you’ll see that they will not give you the half of that. You must tell me in the first place, for how long you wish to have the money : for you must know, the value we give depends in a great measure upon that.” “ A month or two at least,” replied I. “ That is too short a period,” returned Paphnooteetch : “ I cannot give more than three thousand roubles.” I fell into a rage. “ Thou art worse than any Jew, and deservest to be thrown into the Neva along with thy gull-trap.”— “ Why do you please to be angry ?” said Paphnooteetch coolly. “ ‘ A freeman has freedom, and a saved sinner Paradise.’* If you chuse, there is nothing to prevent you from going to another, or pledging it at the Lombard.” I took a hold of Rubopereen’s arm and left the shop in a huff. “ There is no use in getting into a passion,” said Rubopereen to me ; “ for, you must know, it is only bargaining. If he offered

* A Russian proverb.

at first three thousand, he would have probably gone the length of eight or nine. Usurers are themselves glad to lend out more money, in order to get in the more interest, but bargain by the strength of inveterate habit, and to shew that they give out of pure good-will.—That Paphnooteetch is more of a devil than a man. He has made several narrow escapes from the criminal court.” In the midst of our conversation, we arrived again at Kashtchéyeff’s shop and found him busy turning over bills and receipts. “Now, Taraseetch, bestir yourself, we want fifty thousand—count it out and we will give you a whole bagful of diamonds.” “Where am I to get such an immense sum of money?” said he, fetching a long breath and squinting at me through his eye-lashes : “Times are far from good ! But if you have value, let me see it ; perhaps I may scrape it together among my friends.” “I was jesting, I was jesting,” said Rubopereen, “because you always feign yourself poor. But this is what we want : we have an article worth fifteen thousand roubles, and we want ten thousand.” “That is too much, but let us see it.” “Will you please to accompany me to my house—you know that I live quite near.”

We entered Kashtchéyeff’s house. He was a single man, and only an old cook and disbanded invalid watched over his premises, not daring to move a step from the door together. There were three rooms in pretty decent order. One of the walls of his bedroom was quite covered over with sacred pictures, in gold and silver frames : before them a lamp was burning.

Beside the bed there stood an immense iron-chest. Kashitchéyeff begged us to shew him the article, turned it over and over in his hands, higgled a good while, and at last gave nine thousand roubles at three per cent. per month, and, on condition that I should take the money for a half-year, and grant the following acknowledgement :—" I, the undersigned, have sold to the merchant Kashitchéyeff a diamond crest for ten thousand six hundred and twenty roubles, which I have a right to buy back for this sum at any time within six months ; but after six months my right to redeem it ceases." I would not at first agree to write that I had sold the article, but Rubopereen assured me that it was a mere form, and that Kashitchéyeff was a safe man. " If you please, sir," said Kashitchéyeff, " we must not expose ourselves to danger. We bring down upon ourselves calamity by interfering with great folks who are in the same line. An acknowledgement is necessary, in order to include the interest and clear ourselves in case of any complaint. It sometimes happens that, when payment becomes due, we are charged with usury. So you see, we must take care of ourselves."

If I wished to punish my readers, I might fill several volumes with a description of my law-suit which lasted several months ; but after all, I might save myself the trouble, for nobody would read it.

Notwithstanding all the exertions of the Countess Neetchtozyeen and the influence of her friends, providence saved me ; the cause was decided in my favour, and all at once I received upwards of a million of roubles.

I hitherto loved company because I did not know what to do at home. I had received flattering attentions in Moscow, and was in some measure obliged to visit at houses where I was always expected. I never engaged in favour-seeking : Meloveeden and cousin Aneta always took that duty upon themselves in my behalf. But in Petersburg, cousin Aneta who had already passed her bloom, had no great influence : I had no adviser besides her, and I entirely left off frequenting society, partly from false shame and partly not to appear as if I was in want of patronage which I had really no hopes of obtaining. The greater part of the people who occupy a conspicuous figure in Petersburg society, are friends or connections of public men ; and nothing is more intolerable or mortifying to a man of any feeling, than, when he appears in company, to be received with a general coldness, which is sure to be the case at the mere name of a petitioner. Every body avoids being alone with a man who has a law-suit, for fear of being pestered with a request to assist him or forward his views, or of being obliged to listen to vituperation of the judges and complaints of injustice. From my previous observations in the cases of others, I did not chuse to play the part of a *Lazarus*, but preferred to steer clear of the great world. I was fortunate in my little circle, of which Olenka was the ornament. My mother was so fond of her that she could not pass a single day without her ; and Olenka on her part kept my mother company from morning till night, when she returned home to cousin Aneta.

I had no sooner gained my law-suit than, in the

course of three days, I received so many visiting cards and invitations to dinners and *soirees*, that in three months it would have been impossible to return the one or comply with the other. On looking over the cards, I was surprised to see the name of Grabeelen. Every day I made ready to begin my visits, and every day was obliged to desist from my purpose ; time slipped away so rapidly in the company of Oleenka that I had none to spare.

Peter Petróveetch invited me to his house one evening to talk over by ourselves my plans and hopes. He knew already of my love for Oleenka, and advised me to marry as soon as possible, if I was sure of a reciprocal affection. “ My dear friend,” said he, “ happiness comes from heaven like dew, and grief like a thunder-shower. Seize upon the moment which is favourable to your happiness, and refresh your soul with pure love. There is no higher pleasure upon earth than true love and friendship. The soul to which they belong is capable of every thing great and good. But it is not given to every one to enjoy these blessings in perfection, however capable the mind may be of feeling them. I too have loved and been loved, but death snatched away my happiness—I am now grown old—I cannot think of love, but seek pleasure in friendship alone.”

By Peter Petróveetch’s advice, I hired a small but comfortable dwelling, set up an equipage, and, putting some money into cousin Aneta’s hands, begged her to select a suitable outfitting for my bride. The worthy Aneta would fain have furnished a part of it at her own expence, but to this I would by no means consent.

All these preparations were concealed from Oleenka who did not see her wardrobe or jewels till the wedding-day arrived. "My friend!" said she, when she saw them, "thou lovedst me poor, and I avowed my love to thee when thou wast in prison. Now thou art rich, and I am glad on thy account of the change in thy lot; but, as far as regards myself, I confess, it would have been more agreeable to me to love thee a poor man."

Peter Petróveetch undertook to give away the bride, and besides him nobody but cousin Aneta and her family was invited. Aneta's husband forsook upon this occasion his whist-party at the English club, being tempted by a Strasburg tart which his wife procured for the purpose of keeping him at home. When we were all ready to go to church, I received a packet with my address upon it: on opening it, I found a hundred thousand roubles in bank receipts, along with the following letter:—

"Mr. Ivan Ivanoveetch!

"The disobedience of your bride's mother induced her parent, who is my wife, to disinherit her. Notwithstanding all my entreaties and representations, she would never agree to restore the patrimony to her grandchild, being influenced by reports which she heard to her prejudice. I intentionally made a trial of her virtue, and became convinced that she possesses noble feelings, and has not left the path of honour. This induced me again to have recourse to my wife, and I have at last succeeded in obtaining what I so ardently desired. The money which belongs to your bride is transmitted along with this, and I beg you will in-

clude me in the number of your sincere friends and respecters.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.

“ JEREMIAH GRABEELEN.”

I could not get the better of my astonishment, and handed the letter to Peter Petróveetch, who smiled and pulled out of his pocket another letter which he gave me to read. These were its contents—

“ Mr. Peter Petróveetch !

“ The patronage and particular friendship displayed by your Excellency towards Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen, who is about to marry a grand-daughter of my wife, have induced me to interfere in favour of your friend, and I have succeeded in getting my wife’s consent to restore to his bride her mother’s patrimony. Take it as a mark of my particular respect and devotion to you, and as a proof that I am not selfish, but maliciously slandered by evil-minded people, from whom also you have suffered much. From no views of ambition or selfishness would I again wish to enter the service, but merely in order to shew the world that I am not such a one as my enemies represent me, and also to have an opportunity of guiding my children into the career of active duty. I may be of use by my experience in business, and will always endeavour to merit your good opinion. I know that your word is of itself sufficient to procure me what I want. I would wish to receive a small situation of respectability, and such as yielded considerable emoluments, of which I would not pocket a kopeek, being in good circumstances, and free from selfish motives, as you may perceive

from my behaviour towards your protégé Vejeeghen.

“ With this I have the honour to be, &c.

“ JEREMIAH GRABEELLEN.”

“ The rogue !” said I. “ And fool at the same time,” replied Petroveetch : “ none but fools could suppose that they are able to deceive every body and conceal themselves from the penetration of a man who has his eyes about him. If they were wise, they would see it to be for their own interest to be honest. Among rogues there is a sort of instinct which guides them in deceit, for it cannot be called reason, nor can it ever be a match for sound, sterling sense.”

When I related to Oleenka the contents of the letter, and put the bank-billets into her hands, “ I do not know,” said she, “ whether I ought not to return the money to my grandmother, although it is my mother’s property ; but I would like better that I had nothing at all and to be obliged for every thing to thee alone. Take the money and do with it what thou pleasest.”

Two months passed in perfect happiness, and the visiting still remained neglected. Oleenka resolutely declined forming any new acquaintance. “ As you please, my dear friend ! but I cannot help regarding as strange that custom among young married people of driving about a-visiting the third day after marriage, to seek acquaintances for no imaginable reason but as a preservative against approaching ennui, to show off their new equipage on the promenades, and their shawls and diamonds in assemblies, as if this was an essential part of conjugal bliss. Let us have patience —acquaintances are formed by chance, by mutual

choice, and I am at present content with thy company, with thy mother, and my benefactress Aneta."

Peter Petróveetch grew so attached to us that he came every day to dinner, and passed the greater part of the evening. One day he brought along with him a stranger, an elderly man, of a ruddy and hale appearance, with a physiognomy which expressed cheerfulness and goodness of heart. The stranger, on perceiving me, made a stop, attempted to resume his usual smile, but all at once pressed me to his heart and burst into tears, exclaiming, "What a resemblance ! It is he, exactly he !" Then recovering his composure he added : " I was a friend of your father's, his school-companion, and also a distant relation. You have heard perhaps of Count Bezpetcheen ?" " Is it you, trustee of my father !" " Who did not, however, succeed in carrying his wishes into execution, but can only rejoice that Providence has protected thee." The Count desired to see my wife and mother, sat with us till it was late, was cheerful and amiable, and without farther preamble told me that I should consider him as my second father, and that he would be with us every day.

The Count was an extremely worthy and well-bred man ; but having been accustomed from the days of his childhood to have others to labour for him, he spent his time in reading, in agreeable conversation, and in travelling, and had an insuperable aversion to take an active part in business, though he continued in the service, partly through ambition and partly on account of his decayed circumstances. His family, his connections, his long continuance in the service, his uprightness and ho-

nesty, and lastly, his insensibly acquired experience in business, paved the way for his entrance into the high situation which he was now called to fill. One evening at the tea-table, he said : "Vejeeghen ! I am come to offer you the situation of director of my chancery." "Have mercy upon me, Count ! I have not the smallest experience in business, and may do more harm than good. When I was poor, I sought a place for the sake of a livelihood, but now I would on no account undertake what I do not understand. If I had been wanted to command a squadron, and still remained a bachelor, I would have decided in a minute. But what you propose is as strange to me as the Chinese language." "Nonsense, friend," replied the Count ; "I can find more men of business than I have any occasion for : but what I want is an honest man, who, I was certain, would not deceive me nor allow himself to be corrupted." "But if this honest man should be deceived ?" asked I. "He must be also shrewd and attentive—he will then soon learn the course of business." I wished to object and decline the offer, but Peter Petróveetch overruled me, saying that for public affairs honest and disinterested people are absolutely necessary as a check upon the men of business. I consented.

By a strange concurrence of circumstances, I occupied the situation of the brother of the Moscow police-inspector, Arkheep Arkheepetch, and removed to the quarters of Panteleimon Arkheepetch, in which he had no room for his poor brother. Panteleimon had been expelled from the service, and put upon his trial

for nothing at all, according to his own words. But, as he had a wife and children, he made no doubt of being acquitted by exciting sympathy for a man with a family. He found a strong protector in Tchoovasheen already mentioned.

Of the public building belonging to this department, Panteleimon had occupied upwards of twenty rooms himself, assigned about thirty to his favourite underlings, and confined the chancery within four small apartments. The horses assigned for dispatching messengers he made use of himself, the guards he employed as his servants, and the couriers were taken up in running errands to the milliners and dress-makers' shops, and carrying about the town his daughters' and wife's correspondence, and invitation-cards. The clerks having no room for working, crowded about the windows, and passed the time in reading newspapers and talking nonsense, putting their hands only to *interesting* cases, about which they received particular orders from Panteleimon Arkheepetch. Three fourths of the *employés* were there merely for the sake of the honours and rewards to which their family influence gave them a claim; the remainder did the work of all the rest, for a bit of daily bread, and in hopes of bettering themselves. There was such a heap of undecided cases that it was shocking to look at the shelves on which they were piled. It was obvious that every thing had to be changed and put upon a new footing. At first I thought of consulting with some one how to set about the necessary reform, but at last resolved to rely upon my own common sense,

and proceeded to establish the very reverse of every thing which had been there before. I allotted twenty apartments for the chancery, took six for myself, and the remainder I assigned for the clerks, keeping only so many of them as were absolutely necessary for actual service. I dismissed all the aspirants after rewards and honours, telling them to seek for what they wanted on the field of battle, if they had no inclination for the pen, and declaring at the same time that I could give no certificates till all the undecided business should be gone through.

There was one of the clerks in the chancery, Sophron Sophronoveetch Zakonenko who had the name of being a thorough-bred man of business: he was no favourite of my predecessor, but had been retained by him because he could not do without him. I called him one day to a private consultation, paid him some civilities, and begged him to explain to me the course of chancery-business, and to put me upon a plan for getting through with the hideous load of papers which had been suffered to accumulate. This is what Mr. Zakonenko said:—

“ It is only in the courts of law where decisions are made in the form prescribed by the Ukase, that the secretary is obliged to look over the whole case for the purpose of drawing up a summary and preparing a decision. It will occur to any one that looks at the immense pile with which our chancery is filled, consisting of several thousand sheets of paper, that the man must have the wisdom of a Solomon, and the strength of a Sampson, who can wade through such

a slough of writing. Some tact is absolutely necessary. You have only to read the first petitions of the litigating parties at the opening of the law-suit ; then the primary decision of the court, then the petition of appeal, the decision of the second instance, to corroborate the references to the laws—and you are at home. All the rest is superfluous and nothing but talk. From the last decision you form your conclusion, what is to be left in full force, what to be annulled, what to be added, and your resolution is ready. In chanceries which have no right to decide, but are only obliged to investigate cases and petitions to be laid before their superior for a conclusion, who on his part sends them elsewhere for a decision, or sends his decisions for confirmation, there the arrangement is quite different. Here all the necessary knowledge consists in the art of rining the paper skilfully, that is to say of passing the paper over several tables, and bringing it out of the chancery with another face, but with the same body as when it came in. For this nothing is wanted but calculation and practice, to draw up a report with reference or connexion, and including the same circumstances of the case, to shift them to another place. For this you have also no occasion to trouble his Highness ; who, as you may please to know, is not overfond of law papers. With regard to the cases on which the Count must indorse his own conclusions, you must be very cautious. His Highness is a conscientious man, and does not like to sign papers which he has not read, and to decide upon a case of which he knows nothing ; he will lay it aside,

business will accumulate, and owing to that, the Count, yourself, and the whole chancery will get a bad name. Our activity and exactness is measured by the number of law papers which we dispatch. Here is then a way to quiet the Count's conscience, and get rapidly through with business, by the composition of forms of decisions which neither help nor hinder the case, of whatever sort it may be. Here for instance are some general decisions : *To make an investigation and report in due course ; to proceed according to the existing arrangement ; to transmit to the place to which it belongs for an explanation of all the circumstances, and after that, to report ; to present to the higher authority for inspection ; to follow the regular course ; to return to the proper place for a conclusion according to law, and to bring to light all the particulars of the case ; to request an opinion from the place from whence the affair came, and transmit it to the proper quarter ; to receive upon trial, &c.* Private issues are still more easily dealt with ; for instance ; *to ask in a regular way if he has a right to what he claims ; to state the case more fully ; to transmit to the proper quarter ; to wait till the termination of the business ; to investigate farther and then report ; to ask the opinion of the local authority ; to confirm the former decision ; but best of all ; for want of material reasons, to reject, to reject, to reject !* that is both short and clear.

Amidst the multiplicity of business, I was obliged, in spite of myself, to have recourse to the means pointed out by Sophron Sophronoveetch. Papers slipped

through my hands, and were dispatched by thousands, and I soon passed for a prodigy of punctuality and activity. It is true that I took pains upon some of the most important cases, that is to say, I gave them to confidential clerks to read, and to put together short extracts, with a conclusion founded on the real state of the case and the legal authorities ; and in order to observe some arrangement in the choice of business, I wrote down cyphers on separate cards, and made my wife draw them by way of lottery : whatever number she pulled out, regulated the case which I was to take into consideration : this gave me a character for impartiality. In the meantime other papers were dispatched with decisions according to the prescriptions of Sophron Sophronoveetch. Count Bezpetcheen was extremely well pleased with me, and thankful because I did away with the unfavourable opinion which had been current respecting him. From a lazy man he passed for the very reverse. In order to give the greater strength to this opinion, he allotted one morning every week for receiving. On other occasions the Swiss at the door had always the same answer, *engaged*,—while the Count, shut up in his cabinet, was lying upon a sofa reading newspapers and new romances. In the evening he came and drank tea with my wife, and at the same time signed the law-papers. Peter Petróveetch assisted us materially, making short remarks upon cases which fell under his eye : we followed his opinion literally and never erred by so doing.

God gave me a son to increase our family happiness, and the Count took great delight in dandling the infant

in his arms, lamenting at the same time while he looked on Oleenka, that he had remained all his life a bachelor. Slandrous tongues took occasion to represent his friendship in another point of view, and many people who were discontented with me, gave credit to the report that the Count was a lover of my wife : but those who knew him better, saw through the injustice of their inferences, which I laughed at as they deserved.

Peter Petróveetch making use of his opportunities of doing good, promoted all the honest men whom he had formerly known, and, among the rest, procured for the worthy Shtweekoff the situation of governor, and for the merchant Seedor Yermoláyeveetch, the rank of commercial counsellor. I followed the example of Peter Petróveetch, and drew out of obscurity many worthy people : among the rest I gave the honest *Krartálny Nádzeeratl*, Arkheep Arkhéepetch, the situation of overseer of a ward in Petersburg which was the highest object of his wishes.

As it was no secret that I enjoyed the unlimited confidence of Count Bezpetcheen, and the complete controul of that department of state, over which he presided, it was impossible to remain in a state of seclusion. My house was literally stormed by claimants of all sorts, the parties in lawsuits, the friends of young men wanting rewards and promotions, and last but not least, my own relations who of themselves made a formidable host. Among the rest appeared three cousins by the mother's side, sons of my uncle Alexey Petróveetch, who on my grandfather's death had settled as a merchant in Vitebsk and acquired a

decent competence. His children were ashamed to remain in the mercantile profession, when they heard of their cousin being such a great man ; and, as the first step on the ladder of promotion, got the Chamberlain Krootchkotvorsky to draw up for them a certificate, shewing that they belonged to the smaller sort of nobility. Even the Neetchtózyeens did not think it beneath them to solicit the patronage of their relation whom they had persecuted. The ladies, who in Moscow had received me into their houses and befriended me, did not fail to remind me of the obligation, and accordingly sent their grandsons and nephews in dozens to my care. At home, in the chancery, in company, in the theatre, on the promenades, and wherever I went, I was sure to have some of these claimants at my elbow. Three years I passed in this perplexing condition, till at length, having neither time for business, nor leisure for domestic comfort, I set off for Moscow on a month's leave of absence, and from thence gave in a petition for my discharge, accompanied with piteous letters to Count Bezpetcheen and Peter Petróveetch, begging them to free me from my intolerable yoke.

While I waited in Moscow for a determination of my fate, I learned from one of my acquaintances who had just returned from abroad, that poor Groonya finished her career in the hospital of St. Lazare in Paris. I wept over her memory. Unfortunate girl ! With her mind and person, she might have been the ornament of her sex, if in her youth she had attended to the improvement of her heart. Here I also learned that Scotinko had lost his reason, and that his children,

after squandering his ill-gotten wealth, were living in poverty. Sava Saveetch was turned out of his situation, and lost his life in a fire which happened in a drinking house. Zarayzeen died of wounds received in a scuffle : of the other gamblers I could get no intelligence, except of Oodáveetch, who was then on his trial before the criminal court.

After a long correspondence, I at last received my discharge. At this time I learned from Meloveeden, who wrote me regularly, that within a verst of him, on the sea-coast, there was a small but beautiful estate for sale in a picturesque situation, with a large garden and vineyard. I immediately sent money to buy it in the name of my wife ; and set off with my family and mother to join Meloveeden. It is needless to add with what transports he and Petronella received us ; we resolved to spend the rest of our days on the southern coast of Taurida.

I have now lived happily ten years in the enjoyment of domestic comfort, and in the embraces of love and friendship. I have three sons and one daughter : Meloveeden has only one son. We employ ourselves in the elementary education of our children, and pass the time in pleasant conversation, music, and reading ; in walking about and superintending the cultivation of our fields. We are cheerful and at ease, because we seek for nothing, and do as much good as we can. My mother passes her time with Meloveeden's uncle, tells fortunes with the cards, and plays at Tentérey.

Petroff nurses the children, and makes play-things for them, tells the boys about battles, and teaches them to march.

After my variety of experience in the conditions of servant and master, subaltern and superior, Kirgheezian cavalier, and Russian warrior, laziness and activity, spendthrift, and gambler in spite of myself ;—after obtaining a knowledge of men in prosperity and adversity ;—I have retired from the world, but have never stifled the flame of kindly affection towards my fellow creatures. I am persuaded that mankind are more weak than wicked, and that for one bad man you will probably find fifty good, who are not noticed in the crowd, because one bad man makes more noise in the world than a hundred good. I rejoice that I am a Russian ; nay, notwithstanding our oddities and caprices, which are inseparable from humanity as diseases are from our mortal condition, I may dare to affirm that there is not a nation in the world which is more sensible, worthy, and grateful than ours. There is not an empire on the face of the earth in which travelling is attended with less risk than in our little-peopled, woody, and steppy Russia ; nor is there any country where the unfortunate are assisted with such good-will, nor where religious toleration, hospitality, and social tranquillity more generally prevail.

Meloveeden's uncle, in his extreme old age, with difficulty deciphering the letters in Bruce's Calendar, and in the Mirror of Albert the Great, prophesies, that soon, very soon, education, with virtue in its train, will visit every corner of the Russian empire, and spread its gifts through all classes of the community ;

that Russian grandees and ladies will speak Russian, read Russian books, and smile at the propensities of their fathers for every thing exotic ; that our literature will rise to a level with that of England, France, and Germany ; that young people will strive to be useful to their country, in place of canvassing for certificates in order to raise themselves by favour and not by merit ; that the merchants becoming more and more enlightened, will no longer seek after patents of nobility, but form among themselves a respectable, influential, class of society ; that justice will raise her head every where, supported by a rational jurisprudence ; that from the lowest to the highest tribunals, bribe-takers and mischief-makers will no longer prey upon the community. These prophecies have made me take up my pen and describe my adventures, to preserve from oblivion such heroes as Scotinko, Sava Saveetch, and the like, whose existence will probably be discredited in future ages as much as giants and enchanters are in the present day. If my writing in the course of time should find readers, an attentive perusal ought to convince them, that all the evil in the world proceeds from an insufficiency of moral education, and all the good from real sound knowledge. Critics will forgive my faults for the sake of my good intentions, and see that the bad is here introduced for no other purpose than to throw more splendour on the good.

THE END.

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